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JOYS & EARTH

HENRY S. WILCOX

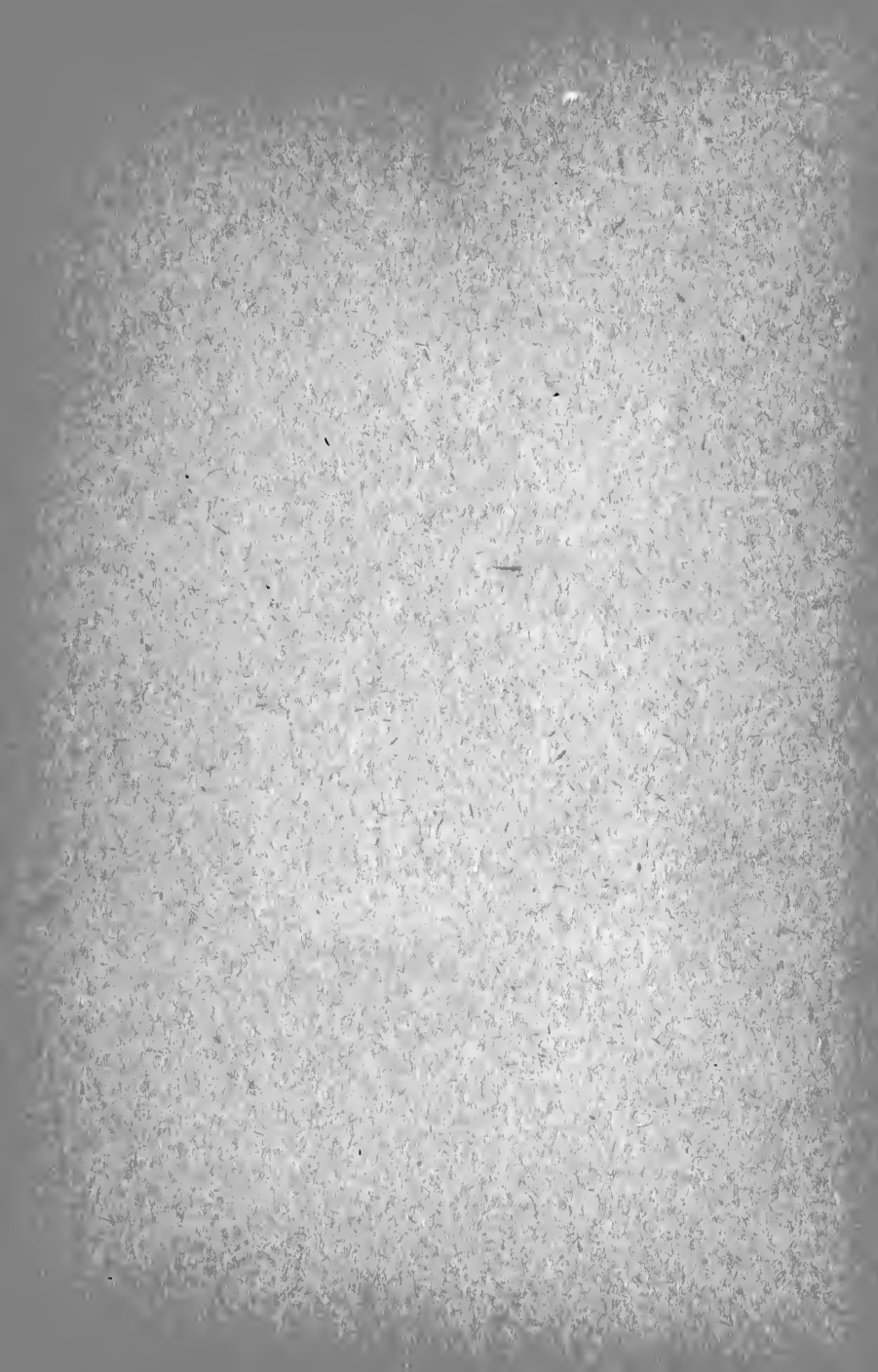


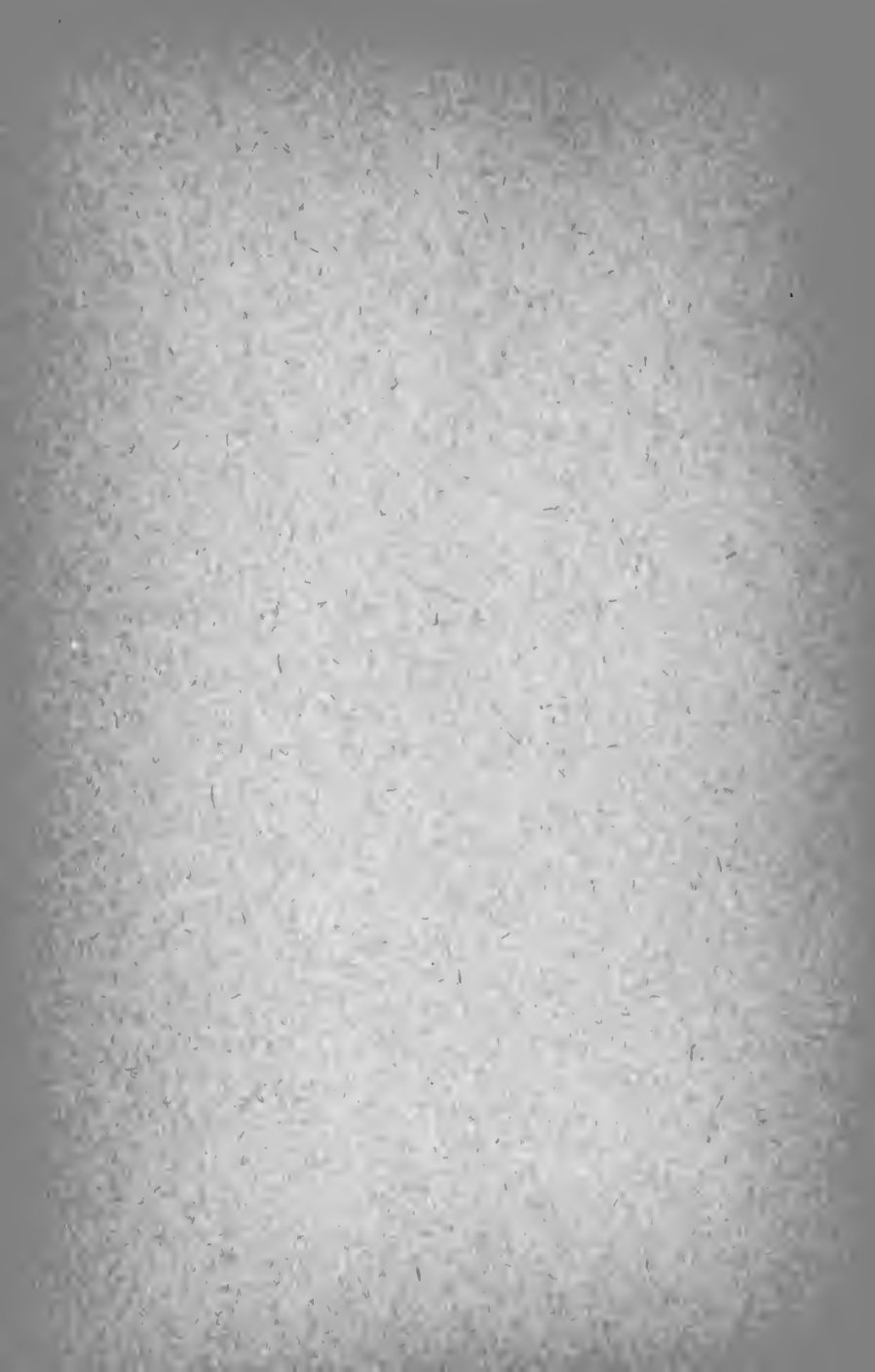
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BESSIE AND THE BABY.

See Page 79.

JOYS OF EARTH

By

HENRY S. WILCOX

ff
Author of *Foibles of the Bench*,
A Strange Flaw, etc.



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HENRY S. WILCOX

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Dedication

To my wife:

I fain would link this little book I write

With some strong stay which time cannot de-
stroy,

So, when it else might sink from human sight,

It would be kept afloat by this strong buoy.

I look about and see this love of thine,

How it abides in strength and fresh appears;
Through pain and worry and through shade and
shine

It still stands firmly after thirty years.

I know of naught more lasting on the Earth

That better doth defy the tooth of time,

Or aught that can excel such love in worth,

So dedicate to thee this book of mine.



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Joys of Earth





Jays of Earth

I

I have heard there's a land of the blest,
Where the glorified ever shall roam;
Where the poor and afflicted, and sorely oppressed,
And the worn and the weary shall ever find rest,
And the homeless shall find a sweet home.

And when at the coming of day
I have watched its fair glories unfurled,
I sometimes have fancied I saw the bright way
Where the feet of the blessed ones ever may stray
Who dwell in that beautiful world.

And often when daylight doth wane,
And the setting sun kisses the skies,
Through the half-parted curtains a rose-bordered
lane
Seems to lead to the bowers of that heavenly plain,
Where the songs of the blessed arise.

When night's sable mantle is spread,
And I gaze on the star begemmed dome,
The far lights that twinkle so brightly o'erhead
Seem beacons of love by the Father's hand fed,
To show me the way to that home.

Joys of Earth

And when on the moon's glowing face
I gaze as she sails through the sky
On the soft-flying cloudlets of silver I trace
A hint of the beauty that shines in that place,
Prepared for the faithful on high;

And I know the sweet joy that may come
To the sin-racked and sorrow-crushed heart,
When faith lifts the curtains so dismal and dun,
And it feels the warm rays of eternity's sun
And the bliss that its beauties impart;

And I would not deprive any soul
Of the comfort which comes from the thought;
For sleeping or waking, I feel its control,
And to reach that blessed haven is ever the goal
For which my best efforts are wrought.

While this Heaven of fancy I prize,
And fondly I hope to get there,
There are joys on this planet I do not despise;
They are closer to us than this home in the skies,
And many exceedingly fair.

Could our swift moving intellects spring
From the earth to the furthestmost star,
Could we give our fond fancy the wildest of wing,
And soar where the angels eternally sing,
And select all the best from afar,

Joys of Earth

On return to the earth we would find
That the joys we had seen in our flight
Abide on this planet, the best of their kind
And are fitted to satisfy body and mind,
If only we view them aright.

Of these I will mention a few
That many are prone to neglect,
Thus hoping a heaven to bring into view,
Where all may be happy if loving and true
And methods of wisdom select.

Then come gentle reader, with me
And wander awhile on the earth;
Let us open our eyes its rare beauties to see,
And taste the delights that for you and for me
Are spread at its banquet of mirth.

II

Oh, where are the Elysian Fields
Of which the poets sung,
Where perfume laden zephyrs play
The blessed isles among;
Where fairest flowers forever bloom,
And gentlest breezes blow
On hills of green and vales between,
And purest waters go.

Jays of Earth

The land where milk and honey flow
By prophets oft foretold,
Where is that land of poesy
Let me its joy behold!
'Tis not beyond the shining clouds,
Upon some distant star,
We might find there a place as fair
But need not go so far.

From Kennebec to Arkansas,
From Erie to the Sea,
The streams that flow wher'er we go
Have wondrous clarity;
And every breeze that fans the trees,
In meadow, vale and hill,
Is perfumed by a thousand flowers
That border every rill.

Forests and fields and meadow lands
Of great fertility,
Bring health and wealth to all who toil
With careful husbandry;
All forms of beauty here abide
Where'er we wish to go
And in this land, on every hand,
Both milk and honey flow.

Joys of Earth

The earth is quite as beautiful
As any distant star;
Our fairest gleams of heavenly dreams
Upon this planet are.
The spectrum finds the fires that blaze
Upon the farthest sun
And those that warm the hearth at home
In substance are but one.

The force that moves the human eye
Moves all the rolling spheres,
It guides Niagara's waterfall
And guides our falling tears,
The same great principle has sway
Through all creation's plan
In fish and fowl, in plant and flower,
In insect, beast and man;

So when I sing the joys of Earth,
I sing of Heaven too,
And praise the bounteous hand that made
The pleasures we pursue.
I know how weak these words of mine,
And yet I gladly raise
The strongest voice at my command
To sing the Maker's praise.

Joys of Earth

III

My theme is pleasure; to explore
The lovely realm of pleasure o'er
 And inventory all
Would make the list, I fear too long
To fit the limit of my song
 So make the number small;
Hoping a few, tho' not the best,
May prove fair samples for the rest.

The numerous joys the ancients knew,
Compared with ours, were short and few
 And these but few received.
Kind fortune now to poorest brings
Delights which not the richest kings
 In former times conceived.
The wealth of Croesus could not pay
For that which we have every day.

Tho' great his wealth, he could not buy;
What none possessed none could supply;
 But we are richly blest;
The rarest fruit of ancient years,
And modern too, for us appears
 In quality the best.
And we with steam and lightning play;
And have their aid from day to day.

Jays of Earth

All flying high or swimming low,
All that in soil or sea doth grow
 Is brought to us in haste;
By skillful methods is preserved
Until it's cooked, prepared and served,
 To gratify our taste;
And on our tables, when we dine,
Are daintiest wares and linen fine.

The richest silks and choicest lace
And softest furs our women grace,
 And also jewels rare;
The brightest gems of every clime,
Are found and polished superfine,
 To make the ladies fair.
Thus highest art the human face
Has beautified in form and face.

And artisans of greatest skill
Contrive our every want to fill
 From every clime on earth—
At home, abroad, where'er we go—
A myriad forces work to sow
 The seeds of joy and mirth,
And many arts are thus combined
To bring us bliss of every kind.

Joys of Earth

IV

'Tis joy to ride the swiftly flying train,
 Borne on the wings of lightning or of steam;
To glide by forest, meadow, hill and plain,
 And sunlit lake and gently flowing stream.
'Tis joy to visit old and storied lands,
 Scenes made familiar to our childhood's ears,
'Tis joy to stroll and muse on famous strands,
 Where valor fought for right in other years.

'Tis joy to see the rugged cedars grow
 On lofty ledges close to caverns deep;
'Tis joy to view the hemlocks grown below
 In mossy marshes where the waters sleep.
'Tis joy to stand upon the mountain's head
 And watch the rain storm sweep across the vale
And when the rustling shower has fully sped
 To see the freshened beauty of the dale.

'Tis sweet to eat wild berries from the bowers
 That gleam in sunshine by the tangled way;
'Tis joy to cull the fragrant prairie flowers
 That make the grassy hills and meadows gay.
'Tis joy to lie at length on desert sand,
 After a hot and weary day has flown
When night has spread its curtain o'er the land—
 And feel the cooling air come gently down.

Joys of Earth

'Tis joy to drink the clear and sparkling rill
That bubbles from the spring beside the way,
When after wandering over vale and hill
We feel the thirst that springs from summer's
ray.

'Tis sadly sweet to see the orb of day,
In orange beauty glide adown the West,
And think not all the powers of earth can stay
His going from the skies in beauty drest.

'Tis joy to see the glorious robe of night
Unfurl the beauty of its countless stars;
'Tis joy to watch the day's returning light,
When morning paints the East with crimson
bars.

'Tis bliss to float at ease at eventide,
Adown the waters of some gentle stream,
While cherished friends are seated by our side,
And all is hallowed by the moon's soft beam.

'Tis joy to see the earliest grass of Spring
Give its bright color to the gray cold clod;
'Tis joy to watch the swelling buds that bring
A matchless beauty to the path we've trod.
'Tis joy to watch the lovely Summer come,
And see the golden harvest of the grain,
To lean against the shocks and hear the hum
Of happy insects on the yellow plain.

Joys of Earth

'Tis joy when Autumn turns the bushes brown,
And gilds with brightest hues the forest trees,
To sit where nuts and fruits are falling down
From branches waving in the gentle breeze.
'Tis joy, when Winter spreads its snowy sheets
On stubble fields and locks the rippling rill,
To sit about the hearth in converse sweet,
While winter winds without are whistling shrill.

'Tis joy to look upon the merry dance
And watch the graceful motions of the gay;
'Tis fun to see the proud and haughty prance;
'Tis sweet to hear the witching melody;
'Tis joy to see the pure, rich yellow cream
Blend with the ripened berries rosy red;
'Tis joy to banquet by a running stream,
With grass below and green leaves overhead.

'Tis joy to see a true soul take a stand
For right against the clamors of the throng,
And deal with falsehood with unfaltering hand,
And fight alone if need be 'gainst the wrong,
'Tis joy to see the light that wreathes his brow,
A heavenly lustre flashing from his eyes;
A strength divine, it seems, inspires him now;
His soul is vibrant with the upper skies.

Joy of Earth

I love the precious land that gave me birth;
I love the legends linked with her bright fame,
'Tis joy to think that through the spacious earth
She strives for justice in fair freedom's name.
'Tis joy to see her beauteous banner float
On other seas as proud as here at home.
'Tis joy to hear it praised by every throat
As freedom's flag wherever we may roam.

'Tis joy to see the face of faithful friend
Shine through the clouds which shroud mis-
fortune's day,
And sweetest music friendship's voice may lend
To cheer the soul in sharp adversity;
'Tis precious joy to feel a kindly hand
Clasp ours the closer as the shadows come;
'Tis joy, when cast adrift from life's lone strand,
To feel the loving arm that guides us home.

How sweet it is to saunter by the sea,
And watch the crisp waves crash against the
shore;
How sweet it is to lie beneath a tree,
On velvet moss, and hear the billows roar.
How sweet it is to feel the ocean's breeze,
In cooling dalliance on our heated brow,
While 'neath the flapping sails we sit at ease
And hear the wavelets lap the vessel's prow.

Joys of Earth

And sweet it is to hear soft music float
On gentle zephyrs o'er a placid sea
At twilight hour, when on some strolling boat
A happy crowd is singing merrily.
'Tis sweet to watch the nimble fishes glide
Through crystal waters on a summer's day,
And see each creature show its shining side,
As wantonly they dart about and play.

'Tis sweet indeed when, after many days
We've spent in coming from a foreign strand,
We see the gleaming of the lighthouse rays
That flash to guide us to our native land.
I love the ocean in its wildest mien
When fiercest bolts of lightning rend the clouds,
And raging waves with lurid flashes gleam,
And furious winds are howling through the
shrouds.

To me the ocean is a mystery
Whose mighty deeps I gladly would explore;
Through all her curious caverns would I stray,
And see her hidden forms from shore to shore;
And sometimes when I sit upon her beach,
And watch the daylight slowly disappear,
And gaze as far as mortal eye can reach,
And naught but rolling waves can see or hear,

Joys of Earth

I fondly fancy o'er her rolling tide,
A boat might bear me to a better land,
Where all the lost ones that I love abide,
And dwell in joy upon a blessed strand.
My heart then hears a call across the sea,
To pass from darkness to that brighter shore
Where love may last through all eternity
And pain and falsehood vex us never more.

To me the ocean seems a mighty sphere,
In which the master wheels of nature play;
A force Divine seems clearly mirrored here,
Which moves its waves in wondrous majesty;
And as I look above the briny deep
Of rolling waters to the starry sky,
My bosom swells with thoughts I cannot speak
My spirit mounts aloft in ecstasy.

V

In every way we turn the sight
Who seeks shall surely find
A myriad scenes that much delight
A well directed mind.

Color and line are so combined
In perfect harmony
That their control may charm the soul
To highest ecstasy.

Jays of Earth

Above, the stars in beauty shine ;
Below, the earth is fair ;
Thus every view seems quite divine
In ocean, earth and air.

From shining cloud to tinted shell,
From insect wing to human face,
From mountain peak to lowly dell
We forms of beauty trace.

In growing leaf and ripened sheaf,
In brilliant stars and flakes of snow,
In Spring's delight and Winter's blight
Rare kinds of beauty glow.

Rise to the highest rocky steep,
And beauty there is found ;
Sink to the lowest ocean's deep,
And beauties there abound.

The microscope and telescope
Now bring into our view
A myriad charms of lovely forms
The ancients never knew.

When from without we turn within
And give our fancy sway,
On walls more bright than earthly light
The rarest beauties play.

The artist's brush, the poet's pen
The highest skill engage,
To place the themes of fancy's dreams
On glowing wall and page.

And so adown the tide of time
A precious freight has come,
Of beauteous thoughts from every clime
And every race and tongue.

The unscaled eye may ever rest,
From morning's dawn till night,
On scenes the fairest and the best,
And thus find great delight.

Then let the windows of the soul
Be opened wide, that we
May yield to beauty's sweet control
Wherever we may be.

VI

Oh, who can fix a limit to the human mind,
Or set a boundary to its pleasant dreams?
It sweeps the universal space that it may find,
For happy thoughts, a multitude of themes.

Joys of Earth

And who can list the means we may employ
To find in objects sources of delight,
Or chart the mountain peaks of human joy,
That all may reach who guide their steps aright?

Some do in scientific research find
Abundant pleasure for their leisure hours;
Some with historic facts do please the mind;
Some dote on ruins, ancient halls and towers.

Some find delight in learning many tongues,
Some watch the insect life with zealous care;
Some study muscles, nerves and heart and lungs;
Some search for relics, bones and fossils rare;

And some through fields of learning take their
flight,
And skim like swallows in a summer sky,
Finding in all some sources of delight,
Are happy, every sweet on earth to try;

From serious comment to the play of wit,
From naked facts to strains of florid rhyme,
Like bees from flower to flower they joy to flit
And thus in pleasure pass the fleeting time.

Joys of Earth

Good books are fountains from which ever flow
Sweet streams of wisdom for the thirsty mind;
In solitude to them all hearts may go
And purest pleasures never fail to find.

The Public library, that great treasure field
With countless wealth of lore—is free to all;
To those who seek, it richest joys will yield,
And none so poor but he may on it call.

Vast as the realm of universal space
Is that wide field the human mind may range,
And find fresh pleasures still in every place,
And great delight in never ceasing change.

A bounteous hand has spread a sumptuous feast,
Countless in kind, exhaustless in extent,
And all so pleasant that the very least
May fill the loving heart with sweet content.

Sometimes our vision takes so low a range,
There comes to us no light to pierce the pall;
But if we to a higher point will change,
A brighter aspect then will cover all.

Joys of Earth

VII

Of all the joys the world contains,
Search for them where we may,
None are so sure to long endure
As work from day to day.

When thirsty we enjoy our drink;
When hungry, relish food;
Sometimes a play or holiday
Or ramble in the wood.

When weary we enjoy our rest,
But after all we find
Some labor still we need, to fill
The cravings of the mind.

The time of sports and plays is short
Until they cease to please;
And scenes of joy upon us cloy—
'Tis then we seek for ease.

Full soon we find a vacant time
That wants employment still,
And nothing short of useful work
This vacant space will fill.

Jays of Earth

No soul can feel quite satisfied
That does not do its part;
Bears not the burdens of the race,
In mine or field or mart,

Or some department where mankind
Are striving to provide
The means to satisfy the wants
Which everywhere abide.

This useful work becomes a joy
To all well-ordered minds,
And causes peace and sweet content
The idler never finds.

The mother, when she sees the babe
That nestles on her breast,
And thinks she gave the infant life,
With joy is richly blest.

And such the thoughts the workers please,
Who realize their plans,
When they at last can view complete
The products of their hands.

Who toils to build will ever joy
His calling to pursue,
As day by day and piece by piece
He sees his dreams come true.

Joys of Earth

Who drives with skill the flying steeds,
Or swiftly running trains,
Feels rare delight as he proceeds
And when the goal he gains.

Who nurtures well a growing plant,
A bird, a beast or tree,
An invalid or little child,
Will feel much joy to see

The object of his tender care
With greater strength has grown,
And thus the law of justice feels
And reaps as he has sown.

So every kind of useful work
Brings blessings in its train—
Sweet peace by day and rest by night,
And balm for every pain.

VIII

Of all the bliss to mortals given
The joys of love are nearest heaven;
Love is the vital air
That fills the plainest face with light
And makes the dullest objects bright
And all that's fair more fair.

Joy of Earth

Love is the sweet, perennial flower
That fairest blooms in darkest hour,
 And sweetest seems in saddest day;
Amid the tropic's heat it grows,
It blossoms on the polar snows,
 Distilling perfume by the way.

It grows as fair in prisons lone
As in the sunlight round a throne;
 And fills all hearts with joy;
If to a palace, or a cot,
This precious flower of love is brought,
 There's bliss with least alloy.

'Tis warmth in Winter's coldest day,
It tempers Summer's fiercest ray,
 And lights the darkest night;
It breaks the threatening clouds of gloom,
The dying soothes, and wreathes the tomb
 With hopes serenely bright.

It nerves the patriot's arm to fight
His country's battles for the right,
 Throughout the spacious earth;
It gives the mother strength to go,
Where death's dark waters often flow,
 To give an infant birth.

Joys of Earth

It wipes the tears from sorrow's eyes,
It sees bright visions in the skies,
 It hears sweet music in the air;
The writer's pen it oft inspires,
The artist's brush its aid requires,
 To paint his dreams so fair.

From king enthroned to crouching slave,
It has the greatest power to save
 The human soul from wretched plight;
It wings to heaven, the strongest prayer,
It helps the stricken heart to bear
 With sin or sorrow's blight.

In youth's gay hours it is most sweet;
When loving lads and lasses meet
 They deem themselves divinely blest;
When old age comes with slanting ray,
True love can make the shortening day
 A very heaven of rest.

And love for kindred hearts may weave
A tie so strong that naught can cleave
 This bond of priceless worth;
United thus, they stand the test
Of every sorrow, and are blest
 With greatest joy of earth.

Jays of Earth

And thus is given a greater power
To meet the tasks of every hour
 And greater bliss to feel;
Each sense exalted by love's art,
All joys a sweeter bliss impart,
 And wounds the sooner heal.

Blest is the one whose kindly face
Shows love for all the human race
 Indwelling in his soul;
But happier he who feels a love
For all below and all above—
 The universal whole.

The lowest insect seems his friend,
The farthest star some ray will send,
 To cheer his upward flight;
Farflung, the love he sends, returns
With countless blessings; thus he learns
 The kindest way is right.

So love becomes a central sun
Round which life's forces ever run,
 And as we gaze above,
And see the mighty orbs that roll
In ceaseless splendor round the pole,
 We feel our God is Love.

Joys of Earth

This faith unfaltering fills the heart
With strength to stand the keenest dart
 That cruel fate may wing;
Infinite Love, we know, some day
Will in its wisdom find a way
 Infinite bliss to bring.

IX

Oh, who can tell the bliss of babyhood,
 The joys the infant drains from mother's breast
When eagerly he quaffs the nectar food,
 Till satisfied, he softly sinks to rest.

His lovely form is fresh from nature's mold,
 Like harp Aeolian which the zephyrs play,
And by the gentlest touches is controlled
 To vibrate notes of sweetest melody.

For who has ever watched a little child,
 In merry prattle on his mother's knee,
And seen his baby dimples when he smiled,
 And not believed his heart was filled with glee?

His bright eyes sparkle like the sunlit dew,
 His laughter ripples like the gentle rill,
In tones as sweet as birds when spring is new,
 And fresh-blown flowerets cover vale and hill.

Jays of Earth

Behold him watch his mother's loving eyes,
And see him note his father's smile of pride,
While folded close in loving arms he lies,
Or sits on downy cushion by their side.

No Autocrat upon the loftiest throne
Is so exalted in his subject's eyes;
Nor can this adulation be unknown—
To all this love the baby's heart replies.

His little craft floats 'neath a peaceful sky,
Upon a gently flowing sunlit tide;
The air is vibrant with a lullaby,
While soft caressing love sits by his side.

Then who shall count the joys of infancy?
Oh, happy days; could they come back to me!

X

From babyhood to childhood now we float;
The bright sky widens, and a swifter stream
Bears on its rippling breast our dancing boat,
The flower-bespangled hills and vales between.

Here full of joyous hope and free from care,
How sweet the prospect looms before our view;
Each scene is fresh and gay, and everywhere
The moving current brings us objects new.

Joys of Earth

Nor do we care to linger by the way
And saunter idly on the flowery mead;
We wish to float as swiftly as we may,
And thus from day to day increase our speed.

The little craft in which we started out
Has now grown wider with the widening
stream;
And many loving friends are now about,
To share the beauty of the changing scene.

How sweet the breeze of morning on the brow,
How sweetly bowers at noon protect from heat,
How sweet the shadows are at sunset's glow,
And when the night has come, our sleep how
sweet.

Oh, precious youth, so full of joy and glee,
Sweet time of happy dreams, come back to me.

XI

Now wider spreads the ever widening sky—
The gentle stream has to a river grown
The boat increases in capacity
And many with us now are drifting down.

Joys of Earth

And now the shores almost recede from sight;
And now they narrow to high jutting banks;
Now fiercely lowering clouds shut out the light
And now great rocks appear in serried ranks.

Sometimes a whirling tempest strikes our boat,
And fills the stream and sky with foam and spray
Our strength is taxed to keep our craft afloat,
And pass the rocks of danger in our way.

These threatening perils in our earlier years
Had caused us fright and driven joy away;
But now in manhood's prime we feel no fears,
We love the storm clouds and the lightning's
play.

To conquer perils gratifies our pride;
Let tempests roar and waters fiercely rave;
With strength and steady nerve we joy to guide
Our boat to safety, and its crew to save.

We love the rapid changes in the scene;
We love to grapple with the dangerous tide;
We love to dodge the rocks that intervene
And threaten to destroy us as we ride.

We love to fight with nature's wildest moods;
We love to see her grandeur when she fights;
We love adventure when the chance is good,
To conquer foes in battle for our rights.

Joys of Earth

We thus grow stronger, brave and confident,
And firm to meet the stroke of every foe,
And so are filled with joy and sweet content,
While years pass on and down the stream we go.

In manhood's prime so brave and strong are we
And full of joyous power, could it come back to me!

XII

Now wider grows the river's flowing tide,
Still wider spreads the sky that covers all,
And fewer now are those who with us ride,
And greatly lessened is the speed and fall.

We long no more for conquests or for storms,
Nor do we crave great changes in the scene;
We wish no more to strain our weary arms,
And are content upon the helm to lean.

The sky is now quite tranquil, and the air
Contains a something that allures to peace;
For that once greatly prized, we little care—
We love to sit and drift and take our ease.

Thus on we drift until the shores are gone,
And we have come into a quiet sea;
Thus on we drift, until we're left alone
To face the ocean of eternity.

Joys of Earth

There sits the old man in his wave-worn boat,
And gazes on the fast declining Sun;
He knows not where to steer, so lets it float,
Till out of twilight comes a Shining One.

This is the angel Faith, who brings new light
To guide his feeble bark far out to sea;
Nor does he dread the coming of the night;
For now he trusts this guide implicitly.

He trusts, whatever shore his boat may reach,
He will awake when morn again has come;
His keel will strike upon as fair a beach
As love can find: so calmly he floats on.

On that fair shore he hopes to find again
The glorious vigor of his manhood's prime,
And there perhaps forever may remain,
With those who loved him on the stream of time.

So with no other guardian now to ask,
No longer does he care a watch to keep;
Faith takes the helm, and, weary with his task,
In peace the old man sweetly sinks to sleep.

O Faith Sublime, what joys do come with thee!
May old age bring this precious faith to me.

Jays of Earth

XIII

The mists of doubts are rising,
The darkness disappears;
We're on a pleasant journey
That may take us many years.

All the world is going with us,
Bound to us by kindred ties,
As the children of our Leader
Who now guides us to the skies.

Long the way we leave behind us,
Stretching backward to the night;
Long the way which lies before us
Reaching forward to the light.

When our course is steep and rugged
And our progress would be slow,
Kindly hands above will help us
If we help the ones below.

While we rise the sky grows clearer,
And the light wind softer plays,
And more beauteous glows the earthland,
Spreading out before our gaze.

Jays of Earth

What below was once uncomely
Now above is wondrous fair;
What was discord now is music,
Borne upon the purer air.

Brighter glows the smiling heavens,
Sweeter blooms the flowerets nigh,
And we feel a loving Presence
Reaching to us from on High.

We are on a homeward journey;
In the land to which we roam
There is spread a glorious banquet
Waiting for our coming home.

Soon before our raptured vision
Will appear the shining spires
Of that bright, celestial city,
Which the waiting heart desires.

Soon our souls will be transported
With a joy beyond compare,
As we hear the heavenly music
Wafted from that city fair.

Oh, what bliss will be our portion,
As that banquet we partake,
And we feel the rarest blessings
Which a boundless Love can make.

Joys of Earth

All the great shall sit down with us—
Saints and prophets of all time,
Angels and the great arch-angels
And our Leader most sublime.

Mighty ones of earth and heaven,
All in glory shall be there,
Shining in their fullest radiance,
Glad to grace that banquet fair.

We shall hear the songs of angels,
We shall hear the seraphs play,
We shall hear the wisest sages,
Pointing out the happier way;

We shall see supernal beauty
In its brightest glory glow,
We shall hear love's loftiest anthems
In their sweetest cadence flow;

But in all that holy concourse
Naught we find will please us more
Than to meet again the loved ones
That we lost in days of yore.

Sweeter than the songs of angels
Will a mother's voice appear,
As she says again "God bless you,"
In the tones we love to hear.

Grander than the saints celestial
We shall view a father's form,
As he clasps us to his bosom
In his love forever warm.

Dearer than the wisest sages,
Friends and loved ones we shall greet,
And with bliss the most ecstatic
Join with them in converse sweet.

There the face that death made ashen
Shall again in radiance glow;
There the form disease had crippled
Shall a full perfection show.

There the mind deranged or weakened
By the cruel shafts of time,
Shall be brought into completeness
That excels its fullest prime.

All our wrongs will there be righted,
All our sorrows will be healed,
All estranged will be united,
And all truth will be revealed.

Let us then lift high our voices,
Singing gladly as we roam.
Hand and hand and happy hearted
Grace our glorious journey Home.

Joys of Earth

The Old and the New Year

I

Cold clouds of leaden hue obscure the sky,
I sit alone. 'Tis midnight black and drear.
Upon the grate the smouldering embers lie,
While tolls the knell of the departing year.
The faces of the dead look from the wall;
Old broken vows come staggering back again.
Out from the curtained night old voices call,
And speak to me of days whose hopes were vain.
This mortal life seems but a passing breath;
Its joys but ashes in the hands of death.

II

About me flits a ghost of vanished bliss,
The sprite of her whose love once made me blest;
Her lips were ruddy as the parting kiss
Which sunset leaves upon the blushing West.
Where is that heart that throbbed with fond desire?
Those eyes like stars, once lit with languid
flame?
That voice, whose dulcet tones did once inspire
All hearts to feel, all tongues to praise her
name?
Grim death has snatched her mortal life away,
And all that earth retains is confined clay.

III

What splendid plans I've pushed with prospects
proud,

And fondly hoped that they would never fail,
Which proved to be but forms of shining cloud,
And vanished like a vapor in the gale.

What clinging friends have I in summer found,
Whose hearts beat high with love when fortune
smiled,

Yet, when the winter came, like frozen ground,
Grew hard and cold and all my trust beguiled!

Mere banks of snow or bars of shifting sand,
Appear the mightiest works that I have planned.

IV

Why do I hope, when hope doth hopeless seem?

Why do I vow, when vows are all so vain?

Why do I live, when life is but a dream?

Why do I love when love must end in pain?

Across the brightest pictures life hath made

Death draws the shadow of the dreadful tomb;

The brightest hues are darkened by its shade;

All joy is banished by its dreadful gloom.

Oh, what a worthless thing is human life,

If death must all destroy to end the strife.

Joys of Earth

V

Now in the jewelled east the dawn appears,
Fresh as the morn that first on Eden smiled;
Its breath inspires new hopes, destroys old fears,
And all the doubts which have so long beguiled.
The glorious skies revive my wavering trust
In that great power that fills the heavens with
light.
Man's course I see is upward, death but dust
Dropped from the forms of spirits in their flight.
The way of death leads to immortal life,
And endless peace succeeds our mortal strife.

VI

Life is a plant not formed to blossom here;
Earth grows its roots and feeds its opening
leaves;
Its bloom requires another atmosphere;
Its fruit more sunshine than the earth receives.
Here by the law of growth it doth unfold
And put its trembling tendrils out with care,
Time tears it up, its swelling buds withhold
Their choicest fragrance for celestial air.
What here is nourished, there shall fully bloom,
And pass to perfect fruitage through the tomb.

VII

Infinite wisdom works as much today
As at the time creation first began.
All things are changed to find a better way;
Such is the course and destiny of man.
From wide experience he must wisdom learn;
Pain is the teacher who oft teaches best;
That is more valued which is hard to earn;
That cheapest held, which easiest is possessed.
Thus all, by means of happiness and pain,
Are led and guided to a higher plane.

VIII

From new to old, and old to new again—
So must the course of nature circle round.
For all our follies we must feel some pain,
But time our anguish stops and heals the wound.
Fondly to scenes of joy our memories cling,
Our tears are dried, our sorrows soon depart;
And thus the good becomes a lasting thing,
And evils quickly cease to sting the heart;
And all our pains to make us better tend,
And bring us greater pleasure in the end.

Joys of Earth

IX

Then hail the coming of the glad New Year;
Let every grief be buried with the past;
No longer shed the unavailing tear
For that which never was designed to last.
Salute the blooming morn with songs of joy;
Let faith inflexible sustain thy soul;
Find in it strength and bliss without alloy;
Press on and upward to thy glorious goal;
Turn like the flower thy face from earth away
And feel the sunshine of Eternal Day.

Retrospective

I

It was a soft and dreamy afternoon,
When summer's reign had reached its fairest
prime—
The sky was cloudless, and a drowsy tune
Came from the reapers, it was harvest time—
I saw her sitting where the maple trees
Sheltered her fair face from the scorching heat,
A book of poems open on her knees,
A rippling river flowing at her feet.
I thought to loiter but a moment there,
The coolness of that pleasant shade to share.

II

I'm talking now about the long ago,
When youth gave her its beauty and its grace;
Sad changes come to all, and well we know
Time takes the roses from the fairest face;
Now on her brow the wrinkles furrow deep;
Her raven curls are sprayed with tints of snow;
Those ruddy lips, where kisses seemed to sleep,
Lost all their tempting freshness long ago.
And yet, when last I saw her faded face,
Some of her youthful charms I still could trace.

Joys of Earth

III

Oh! had you seen her when she sat with me,
Beneath the maples on the river's side,
Then would you know how happy I must be
When first I thought that she would be my
bride.

I too was young. Oh that our youth, so sweet,
Should like the flowers of summer fade so fast;
But age must come; I know it is not meet
That we should grieve o'er that which cannot
last;

But thinking of the joys of former years
Does often turn the blood of age to tears.

IV

Yet deem not these to be the tears of grief;
They come as much from joy as from my woe;
'Tis thus the swelling bosom finds relief,
When living o'er the joys of long ago.

Sweet as the sadness in an angel's song,
Who sings of loved ones blest by death's embrace,

Come now the memories of the days long gone,
When first I learned to love her radiant face.
I know such thoughts may make the tear drops
start,
And yet I hug these memories to my heart.

V

Mine has not been a life of peaceful ease.

Mid storms and whirlpools on the sea of strife
I've fought with death when terror rode the breeze,

And seen my blood drip from a foeman's knife.
Now through these dreadful years of toil and fight,
Piercing the baleful mists of blood and tears,
Fair as the radiance of celestial light,

Come these dear memories of my early years,
And gladly I would feel all former pain,
Could I but live those happy years again.

VI

We met by chance that summer afternoon;

Though we had known each other long before,
Never till then, had we conversed alone;

She was my friend, I ne'er had hoped for more.
'Tis strange indeed, and hardly can I tell

How love was born and grew between us there;
How it did charm us with its mystic spell,

And bathe us in a bliss beyond compare.
I know the heavens never seemed so bright
As when I kissed my love good-bye that night.

Joys of Earth

VII

We gazed into the sky where not a cloud
Marred the bright ocean of unspotted blue;
We saw the river sparkle where it flowed,
And heard the light winds sighing as they flew;
We looked afar upon the gentle slopes,
And saw the reapers glean the golden grain;
We talked of Death the reaper, and the hopes
That loved ones have that they may meet again;
We spoke of duty here and joy above,
Of friendship true, and constancy in love.

VIII

She told me meekly of her cherished hope,
That God might keep her from the paths of sin,
Guide her aright and give her strength to cope
With all life's trials, and his favor win;
And when I told her of the fairy dreams
That I had formed for future wealth and fame,
She sighed, and wished that all my cherished
schemes
Might bring me joy and keep me free from stain.
Sweet as the accents of a seraph's song
Winged her kind prayer that I might keep from
wrong.

IX

Like fresh blown roses moist with morning's mist,
Her crimson lips did bloom divinely fair;
So fit had nature framed them to be kissed
I felt that I could cling forever there.
I saw the lovelight languish in her eyes;
I saw the blissful color come and go;
I felt the ardor in my pulses rise;
Our voices then grew tremulous and low,
Then at her side one dimpled hand was thrown;
I caught and clasped it fondly in my own.

X

O Love! If I again could feel the deep
Ecstatic joy that then my bosom blest,
When strong desire did like a tempest sweep
Through my charmed soul, and draw me to her
breast.
Like thirsty pilgrim I did wildly drink
From her sweet mouth in many a rapturous
kiss;
Her soft lips trembled, yet she did not shrink,
But met my warm embrace with yielding bliss.
Moments like these do fix the fate of years;
Who knows their joy oft feels the weight of tears.

Joys of Earth

XI

I loved and was beloved. And love, indeed,
Can light the darkest gloom of mortal woe,
Love guards the grave and hears the helpless plead,
It wipes the tears of sorrow when they flow.
But youthful love is of all love most sweet,
And when it comes with truth from beauty's
breast,
Then heaven descends, and in its joys complete
The dullest heart is made divinely blest.
But much we miss the flowers when falls the frost
And most we cherish love to us forever lost.

XII

Yet of the many joys that love can claim
The crowning moment of its greatest bliss
Is when the youthful hearts who feel its flame
First taste the rapture of its fervent kiss.
But could I feel again her sweet embrace,
Though time has taken much that youth ad-
mired,
Love would not miss the roses from her face,
Nor age forget the flame that youth inspired;
For love hath life that time cannot destroy,
And were she mine I'd crave no greater joy.

XIII

A year ago I sought the hallowed place
That love holds sacred in my memory yet,
And there I vainly strove, but could not trace
One living thing that grew there when we met.
Where stood the maples, now the waters play,
The grass-grown bank has yielded to the tide;
The channel of the stream has moved that way,
And piled white sandbars on the other side.
A mist of years now saddens all the scene
That to my youthful fancy seemed so green.

Jays of Earth

I

To a Friend

I have asked as I strolled through the woodland
at night

And heard the sweet whip-poor-will's song;
And through quivering branches the moon's silver
light

Softly checkered my pathway along;

II

I have asked when the beams of the morning were
thrown

O'er the earth wet with heavenly tears,
And wondered at sunset, when musing alone,
If our friendship would lessen with years.

III

When I see the boughs green in the smile of the
spring,

By the frosts of the autumn made bare,
Then I ask will the roses of friendship still cling
Through the cold days of worry and care?

IV

If the sweet flowers of summer must soon fade
away,

And their brightness be wrecked by the blast,
Then how can we hope that our friendship will stay
When the winter of age has been passed?

V

Yet I cannot believe that so precious a gift
Can be made for a cheat and a snare;
I am sure 'twas intended our spirits to lift
To a plane that immortals may share.

VI

'Tis not like earth's flowers, a product of clay,
That must soon o'er its bosom be strewn,
But the flowers of the soul are immortal, and they
In the gardens celestial are grown.

VII

Then this gem of our friendship, so pure and so
fair,
I shall treasure as riches untold,
And close to my heart this jewel so rare
While I live I shall fondly enfold.

VIII

And when we shall pass to that glorified land,
And have left all that's false and impure,
May we find that our friendship triumphant shall
stand
And there shall forever endure.

Jays of Earth

The Little Village Church Among the Trees

I

Of the many cherished pictures that in memory
brightly glow

There is one that brings me thoughts that ever
please.

'Tis a weather-beaten building where in youth I
loved to go;

'Tis the little village church among the trees.

II

There the friends I loved in boyhood oft assembled
Sabbath morn;

Sang the sacred songs and heard the preacher
preach;

There on wings of true devotion were our spirits
upward borne,

And to heaven's shining portals seemed to reach.

III

At its altar pious parents did their children conse-
crate

To the love of God and righteousness for life;

There the happy bride and bridegroom did their
marriage celebrate,

Took the blessed vows that made them man and
wife.

IV

There the last sad rites of mourning were uttered
o'er the dead,
Ere we bore them to the tomb across the vale;
There the tender words of sympathy and love were
softly said
To the broken hearts that death left in its trail.

V

I have seen the pomp and glory that emblazon
marble halls,
Which with sacerdotal splendor proudly shine;
About whose magic altars a mysterious shadow
falls,
And beauty blooms in radiance quite divine;

VI

But this little wooden building, and the oaks that
round it grow,
Bring to my soul a sweeter, holier peace,
And the grandest earthly temple which the wealth
of man can show
Equals not this little church among the trees.

Jays of Earth

VII

As I sit now in life's gloaming and look o'er the
stubble field,
And see the winding path on which I've trod;
How precious are the memories that these early vis-
ions yield
Of the friends who first directed me to God.

VIII

I would give all worldly grandeur could I sit again
and hear
That village preacher teach his little band,
And listen to the voices that in youth I loved so
dear,
As they sang the gospel songs at his command.

IX

And when earth life is closing and I lay me down
to die;
When wealth is dross, and fame's allurements
cease,
May my last thoughts be the first ones that to God
then brought me nigh,
In this little village church among the trees.

X

I ask no mausoleum to enclose my mortal form;
No splendid funeral cortege would I show,
Borne by the friends that loved me in the town
where I was born,
From this little church across the vale would go.

XI

And if, through God's great mercy, I the joys of
heaven see,
And from mortal sorrows find complete release,
I have faith the brightest spirits that will come to
welcome me
Will be from this village church among the
trees.

Joys of Earth

Des Moines

Fair City of forests where hillsides and vales
Are embraced by two rivers that gently unite;
Whose breezes are wholesome, whose soil never
fails,
Whose scenes of rare beauty enravish the sight.

No tall rugged mountains here vault icy peaks,
No wide dreary plains make a desert of waste,
No fierce foaming cataract wild rushing leaps
To chasms from cliffs with impetuous haste.

But nature appears in her gentlest of moods
And methods so moderate always employs
That hills, dales and streams and beauteous woods
Are fashioned to cause us the greatest of joys.

You should see her when summer embroiders her
streets,
With garlands as green as the earth ever grew;
You should sense in the Springtime the odorous
sweets
That are wafted from flowerets refreshed with
the dew.

Joys of Earth

You should stroll by her streams where the tall
grasses grow,
Where the song-birds of summer sing all the
glad day;
You should stand on her bridges when moonlight's
aglow
And watch her bright rivers meander away.

From her loftiest hill, lifts a dome that may vie
In the sheen of its gold with the glory of dawn;
'Tis the Capitol Building that pierces the sky,
And no stone bears a taint of corruption or
wrong.

Here the State sends her statesmen to frame her
fair laws
That are her models for morals, the right to
maintain;
Here sits her Great Court that never gave cause
To suspect its just motives or soil its fair name.

Here Progress a steady march safely maintains,
Moving forward as fast as the right will allow;
And the City her lead in the nation retains,
Puts the wise at the helm and the just at the
prow.

Jays of Earth

The wealth from her coal fields and wealth from
her soil

Form the basis for plenty in factory and mart
That learning and art and genius may toil
For refinement of soul and expansion of heart.

From her center, great railroads reach out through
the land

And convey to her lap, the choice products of
earth,
She fashions them fitly with most cunning hand,
Refines and returns them increased in their
worth.

Thus her people in joy and in riches expand,
Her area of conquest increases each day;
And splendid the mansions her people command
And great the proud structures where commerce
has sway.

She is now in her youth, in the dawn of her power,
Who shall speak of her prowess when zenith is
nigh;
Like the day-star her glory may shine in that hour
O'er the wide-spreading world from her throne
in the sky.

The Autumn Leaf

I

Its life is now ended, its mission is done,
By the chill winds of Autumn its requiems sung.
 The breezes of summer have kissed it in play,
 The sunlight has laved it for many a day;
And bright were the colors it bore on the bough—
But frosted with death it is lovelier now.
 And this is the lesson which nature here gave,
 The brightest of glories encircles the grave.

II

Then why should we shrink at the thought of the
 tomb
When the flower that we love shall eternally bloom?
 Why sing we sad anthems when all should
 rejoice
And make the earth glad with the sound of
 the voice?
Let us catch up the song that nature has sung,
And chant its glad chimes as we journey along.
 And when death's frost is falling, cast sor-
 row away,
And don our bright robes for Eternity's day.

Jays of Earth

My Spirit Friends

I

They come to me often, my spirit friends,
When burdens seem greater than I can bear;
I feel the touch of their gentle hands;
Their soft caresses are on my hair.

II

Their presence revives my flagging zeal,
When the cause I'm pleading I know to be
right;
They stand by my side and aid my appeal,
And my faith returns and my hopes grow
bright.

III

And often at mid-day, when long I've essayed
To unravel a knotty and troublesome skein,
A hand on my shoulder is lovingly laid,
And my mind is opened and all made plain.

IV

And when in the evening my labor is done,
And I sit and muse in the twilight gray,
These loving friends come to me one by one,
And softly touch me as well as they may.

V

My mother then places her hand on my cheek,
Or with strokes that are gentle lays back my
hair,
And others have methods by which they may speak
Of their loving presence and make me aware.

VI

As the years go by in their ceaseless flow
More loved ones pass to that happy strand;
When I bury their forms I grieve, but I know
They are added at length to my spirit band.

VII

And oft through the veil that hides them from view
Is extended toward me a fair, loving arm
To guard and to guide by a love that is true,
And keep me from falling and shield me from
harm.

VIII

The gray hairs are gathering now on my brow,
And the wrinkles of age in my face appear;
My youthful vigor seems vanishing now,
And my day of departure will soon be here.

Joys of Earth

IX

There's much I must leave which I hold most dear,
As I pass from this plane to the spirit land;
But Oh! so sweet are the voices I hear,
That are wafted to me from that blessed strand.

X

The promise of heaven is felt in the play
Of the musical zephyrs which pass that gate;
Where Lillie and Violet, Hiram and May,
And my father and mother together will wait.

XI

There are others whose names I may never dis-
close,
Whom I love with a love that shall never de-
part;
They come to me often at daylight's close,
And their loving presence brings cheer to my
heart.

XII

So winters may come and summers may go,
And the beautiful roses of youth may decay,
My joy still is boundless, for always, I know,
I am nearing the shore where my loved ones
stay.

Inspiration

I

Sweet heart, dear heart, I live in thee;
And love for thee fills all my soul;
Where'er I go, whate'er I see,
Thou art my thought, thou art my goal,
Thy tender love hath made me blest,
Inspired my work and lulled my rest.

II

Sweet heart, dear heart, my life is song;
And all of thee and all to thee;
I hear no discord, fear no wrong,
Thy love hath made a world for me;
Thy perfect soul I seem to greet
In every lovely thing I meet.

III

Sweet heart, dear heart, what wealth is mine,
Whom love has brought such boundless bliss?
And thou, beloved, what power is thine,
That lifts me to a heaven like this?
I ask no more; I merely pray
That what I have may not decay.

Joys of Earth

Fond Memories

I

When I sit beside my children,
And we watch the firelight's glow
Oft my mind delights to wander
To the scenes of long ago.

II

In a little country village,
Near a river where the trees
Hid a lake of witching beauty,
Gently rippling in the breeze,

III

Stood a plain, unpainted cottage,
With three little rooms below,
And a small unfinished attic,
Where to sleep I'd often go.

IV

In the rear a well and windlass,
In the front the village street,
And on either side a garden,
With a fence and barn complete.

V

Here my father came with mother,
Shortly after they were wed;
Rich in love, but empty handed,
Hoping here to earn their bread.

VI

And he cleared about an acre,
Built a fence and reared this cot,
I was born here and brothers—
So I cherish much the spot;

VII

Now again the toil-stooped shoulders
Of my father's form I view;
See his hands so hard and calloused,
See his face so strong and true.

VIII

And again I see my mother,
Frail and weak, yet working there;
Broken down by toil and sickness,
And yet full of loving care;

Jays of Earth

IX

See her shriveled hands, and tresses
 Streaked with white and thin with years;
As the day when last we parted,
 And she blest me through her tears.

X

'Twas a fierce and raging winter
 At the time my mother died;
Soon my father followed after,
 And I placed them side by side.

XI

And my heart is fondly yearning
 For that vanished home to-night,
As I hear the night winds sighing
 And the mantel is so bright.

XII

Many little homely dwellings
 Nestled in that forest fair;
Most were warped and weather-beaten,
 But dear friends resided there;

XIII

And what now remains I treasure
With a love that cannot fail;
For the visions of my childhood
In my memory never pale.

XIV

Through the village ran a brooklet,
By its banks of shining sand;
It was made from springs of crystal,
Rising in a meadow land;

XV

And at other points the waters,
Clear and cool, came from its bank;
Founts of nectar to the thirsty,
And from these I often drank.

XVI

Down this brooklet oft I've wandered,
In my merry boyhood hours,
Till I reached the gentle river,
Where a ridge of cedar towers.

Joys of Earth

XVII

On its sunlit hills in springtime
First the snowdrop did unfold,
Its fair cups of snowy whiteness,
Filled with glints of glittering gold;

XVIII

Then the violets came, and roses,
And the lillies followed too,
And a thousand sweet wild flowers
On these hills in beauty grew.

XIX

Fruits of every kind abounded;
Trees and plants and bushes gay
Teemed with fruitage most delicious,
Everywhere I chose to stray.

XX

When the Autumn came, the forests
Donned their robes of golden brown,
And from nut-trees fell the treasures
Which the breeze sent rustling down;

XXI

And at last, when pinching winter
Brought its gales of drifting snow,
Happy hearts and smiling faces
Sat about the wood-fire's glow.

XXII

Thus by song and game and story
Winter days are passed in cheer;
And before its stay grows tedious
Springtime joys again appear.

XXIII

There's a road that passed the school house,
And wound eastward to the lake,
There when evening drew its curtains
Often I a stroll did take.

XXIV

And there sitting in the moonlight,
I have watched the waters gleam,
And built castles for the future
Which I find were but a dream;

Joys of Earth

XXV

And there often in the sunlight
I have watched the wavelets play,
As they climbed the shore and kissed it,
And as softly sped away.

XXVI

There's a way of wondrous beauty,
By the graveyard to the mills;
Where a high bridge spans the mill-pond
And it nestles 'mid the hills;

XXVII

There I've often in life's springtime
Watched the sunset's golden glow,
Saw it gild the distant hilltops,
And the waters blaze below.

XXVIII

And how often have I wandered
By this beauteous river's side,
Picking flowers, or from the ledges
Casting stones into the tide.

XXIX

There were paths through tangled forests,
Where the bushes and the vines
So entwined I had to part them,
Where I've traveled many times,

XXX

Picking nuts or hunting berries,
Looking for a place to fish,
Or in youth's sweet idle freedom
Following up each boyish wish.

XXXI

There were paths across the prairies,
Where the phlox and daisies grew;
There were ways through sloughs and meadows,
Which I often did pursue.

XXXII

Oft I joyed to watch the wild bird,
As it sang its merry song,
And the butter-flies so gorgeous
As they gently flitted on.

Jays of Earth

XXXIII

Here my heart first learned the lesson
That it never can forget;
Now I see her in the firelight
And she's smiling to me yet;

XXXIV

And a host of precious secrets
Bind me firmly by their chain,
So that every thrill of pleasure
Brings a secret throb of pain.

XXXV

Yet when night has spread its mantle,
And the winter's air is chill,
And the drifting snow is flying,
And the gusts are whistling shrill,

XXXVI

And the grate is blazing brightly,
And my children gather near,
On these scenes I love to linger,
Though they bring the bitter tear.

To My Violin

O Violin, my Violin,
How sweet the voice that dwells within
Thy little magic shell!
No bird that floats on airy wings,
No prima donna when she sings,
Can ever sing as well.

O Violin, my Violin,
Could I command the power within
The compass of thy throat,
On wings of song I'd upward fly
And join the angels in the sky,
And sail a fairy boat.

O Violin, sweet Violin,
When early morning does begin,
I love to seize the bow,
And dance it on thy quivering strings,
And hear the merry voice that rings
In accents soft and low.

O Violin, soft Violin,
When evening shadows have come in
I turn again to thee;
I serenade the twilight pale
By drawing from thee thy sweet wail
In soothing melody.

Joys of Earth

O Violin, fair Violin,
When filled with sorrow, as I've been,
In thee I solace find;
The tender tunes of early years
When voiced by thee, seem wet with tears,
Yet soothe my feverish mind.

O Violin, kind Violin,
When plagued by pain, despair or sin,
And sympathy I seek—
When friends are false, I find thee fond
And ever ready to respond
With strength when I am weak.

O Violin, gay Violin,
I love to see the dance begin,
For then thou hast the sway;
Thy quick notes make the dullest prance,
And help the old rheumatic dance
And cast his age away.

O Violin, soft Violin,
Please play that blissful theme again,
While in the waltz I glide;
In Love's embrace I sleep, I dream,
I'm softly floating down the stream,
An angel by my side.

Joys of Earth

O Violin, proud Violin,
Your notes are filled with glory's din,
While now the march you play;
The armed troops now tramp and shout,
And gorgeous banners are flung out
To grace the grand array.

O Violin, sad Violin,
A captive spirit wails within
Thy narrow prison cell,
While up and down the fingers glide
And nimbly leap from side to side;
Its tale of grief to tell.

O Violin, great Violin,
Age cannot take away thy vim;
The older thou dost grow,
The sweeter is the voice that sings
When swiftly o'er thy trembling strings
Cavorts the dainty bow.

O Violin, true Violin,
(For you my constant friend have been,
And so shall ever be),
Tho' age and poverty may come,
And I be left to play alone
Thy voice shall comfort me.

Joys of Earth

O Violin, dear Violin,
When light of life is burning dim,
 And earth shores fade away;
Whether I sink or float or fly,
'Twould give me joy if only I
 Could hear thee sweetly play.

O Violin, loved Violin,
Should Heaven's porter let me in,
 As fondly I aspire,
For harp of gold I would not care;
I'd only wish to find thee there
 To join the heavenly choir.

Music

Music hath many charms;
To ears attuned she brings an inspiration
Of great power. To our merrier hours
She adds hilarity, and for our days of grief
She has a sympathetic voice.
All wishes and emotions find
In her a fit expression. She inspires
The gay to dance, the brave to fight,
And gives the lover wings to leave the earth,
And dream of bliss ineffable.

But she hath yet a charm more potent far than
these.

At her command, scenes of rare beauty
Flit before the enamored sense, and every instru-
ment
Can conjure visions suited to its voice.

Not long ago a symphony I heard,
Played with superior skill by many instruments.
All were in unison when the piece began;
The forceful beats of drums and cymbals,
Over-crowding all, gave to the whole a martial tinge.
Methought I saw before me pass
A troop of soldiers marching in parade,
And as their serried columns moved

Jays of Earth

And banners flaunted 'mid their sun-bright arms,
A mighty host in holiday attire shouted for joy;
And I was one whose pulse to every drum beat
danced.

But soon the scene was changed:
The silver bugles now the theme essayed.
I stood upon a sky-pierced mountain's top;
The breeze of morning was upon my brow.
The gorgeous curtains of the bannered east
Disparted, and a choir of radiant angels then
Seemed calling me to bliss. The heavens
Were vibrant with sweet tones, and each
Contained a promise of celestial joy.

Again the scene was changed;
The violins now took the theme;
Then I was sailing in a fairy boat,
With flowers bedecked, and she my best beloved
Was at my side. The welcome zephyrs
Of the afternoon played with our locks;
And thus we glided down the shimmering stream;
But when the silver-throated flutes began,
The verdant forests garlanding the shores
Were filled with singing birds of sweetest notes,
And every zephyr brought a shower of pearls.
And so we floated in that dream of love,
And far adown the stream beheld
A sea of everlasting bliss.

Jays of Earth

But now a change of greater scope came on;
The cello's sad sweet wail took up the theme.
T'was evening then, and from the trellised porch
I watched the waning daylight's glow. The west-
ern sky

Now bade the setting Sun good-night,
And twilight came in sober gray.
It was the hour of prayer, blest by that peace
Which follows closely on a day of toil—a sovereign
balm

For weary bodies and for care-worn souls.

But when the sweet-voiced clarionets chimed in
I thought 'twas day-break and I heard
The crowing chanticleers salute the morn,
With notes familiar to my boyhood days,
When by such sounds awakened I had oft
Rubbed my half opened eyes,
Looked at the clock, and felt that I would give
The greatest treasure that the world contained
To sleep another hour.

Then all the instruments conjoined their tones
And gave the theme a livelier change;
Then sat I in a spacious hall,
Furnished and furbished in the gayest style;
And heard the merry laugh and saw the forms
Of jeweled women and white-fronted men,

Jays of Earth

And some were whirling in the dance's maze,
And some were at the tables feasting;
And some in mutual converse were engaged;
And all one scene of social joy composed.
Of this I was a part, and felt the thrill
Which comes from blending in a happy throng.
The first part of this symphony
Had reached its end. Such were the scenes
It conjured up before my ravished sense.

Bessie and the Baby

A dainty dimpled baby I will introduce to you,
With rosebud mouth and lily skin and orbs of violet
hue,

And a young and fair-haired mother with eyes of
azure blue,

And myself the happy grandpa, for I own the
precious two;

They are my daughter Bessie and her baby.

His active baby fingers curve as tendrils on the vine,
Like threads of finest silk the locks that on his fore-
head shine,

His face reflects his mother's both in color and in
line

And it's sweet to see the mother's love and baby's
love entwine,

As to her heart my Bessie folds her baby.

Could you hear his merry laughter and his gurgle
when he plays,

And see the sweet and sunny smile which ripples
on his face

And behold her hug and kiss him while he meets
her loving gaze,

You'd admit that no Madonna and her child excel
the grace

Of my charming daughter Bessie and her baby.

Jays of Earth

When the shrill night winds of Winter filled the
street with drifted snow
With delight I've watched a picture by the mantel's
rosy glow,
And have felt a thrill of pleasure none but Grandpas
ever know,
As I saw her soft caresses, and could hear him coo
and crow,
When my Bessie spent the evening with her
baby.

"Oh, see him, papa; see him!" she exclaims with
eager joy,
And her clear eyes sparkle proudly as she views
her lovely boy,
And each sweet note he utters gives her bliss
without alloy,
And I wonder at the antics that this cherub can em-
ploy,
As I watch my happy daughter and her baby.

And my busy mind goes backward to an Autumn
long ago,
And I see a little cottage where the waving maples
grow,
And behold a little baby sweet and pink as this I
know,

Jays of Earth

And I watch as proud a mother as she hears her
baby crow;

It was then my daughter Bessie was the baby.

Then my roving thoughts go forward to a future
now unknown,

When this baby boy has builded for himself a happy
home,

And with some winsome daughter has a baby of his
own;

Shall I watch this baby prattle, or will a mossy
stone

Tell the tale of Grandpa, Bessie, or the Baby?

For thus the stream of human life flows on from
year to year;

Some days are sad and some are glad, and some are
filled with fear;

Some laugh for joy, some groan with grief, and
some are on the bier,

And none can state what fate may wait for those
we love most dear—

For either, Grandpa, Bessie or the Baby.

Joys of Earth

But whatso'er the fortune that for Grandpa may
 remain,
May Heaven its choicest blessings shower upon this
 lovely twain,
And shield them ever from disease, from poverty
 and pain,
And loving spirits guard and guide and keep them
 free from stain,
Is Grandpa's prayer for Bessie and her baby.

Spring

The air is vibrant with the notes of Spring;
A choir of many birds sings joyously,
And through the mellow haze the morning sun
 shines warm,
Drinking the dew that swathes the greensward
And the contents that the dainty cups of plants and
 flowers
Have in the night collected.
The forms of beauty, which the frost fiend's touch
Once added to the Autumn's dead,
Again appear in pristine freshness,
And all the wrecks that wasteful winter made
Are now restored.

Now resurrection is the theme of nature's song;
No ear so dull as not to hear the tones of this sweet
 hymn;
No heart so hard as not to bound with hope, and
 feel the universal joy.
And yet there is a thought
That makes a discord in the chime of Spring:
Nowhere among the now reviving forms
Find I the loved ones, taken from my heart,
Ere Summer's reign had ended.
There seems no Spring for them;
There seems not in the universal space

Jays of Earth

A potency to bring my darlings back to me.
Nor can the new reviving force,
That clothes the barren trees with fresh new leaves,
And dons the brambles with a coat of green,
Bring back the lustre to my faded eyes,
Or put youth's color in my thinning hair.

On the procession moves, and I move with it,
And the gaping tomb awaits to cover all.
Our mortal bodies are as Autumn leaves
That gusts may scatter on the hungry earth,
To fertilize new forms now waiting for our places.
And yet, beyond the panorama of the Spring,
Work countless forces which we cannot see,
Save in their works. These are not sports of time;
They know no dissolution at the hand of death,
Are not congealed by frost, or burned by fire,
But ever wait a fitting time to prove their potency.
'Tis not its limbs or leaves which caused the tree;
Nor does the acorn in its fragile shell
Encompass the great oak.

All proof points to a force more real
Than that now visible to mortal eyes,
And such may be the force that guides my pen,
As well as holds in unity the rolling spheres;
Not one, but many forces acting all as one,
And governed by fixed rules,
And moving outward from within, through all
The interstices of the unseen world.

Jays of Earth

And now methinks I see a Spring
Of which our mortal Spring is but the shadow:
A Spring extremely beautiful and of enduring date,
In which appear all creatures that have lived,
Who shine in all the glory of their fairest prime.
All wounds are healed, all injuries repaired,
All eyes unscaled, all fogs dissolved,
And all that once seemed evil proven good;
There loving and beloved together dwell,
And all, affined in perfect truth,
Find peace and joy in loving harmony.

Joys of Earth

A Great Operation

A learned man was Doctor Bugg,
Who high had flown and deep had dug;
All streams of learning had he drained,
And highest skill he had attained.
He knew the nature of each pill,
And what would cure, and what would kill;
He knew each muscle and each bone,
And what to cut, or let alone.
Miss Simple had the stomach-ache
And thought that she contained a snake;
She felt it worm and squirm and bite,
From early morn till late at night:
With vermifuge she vainly tried
To drive the snake from her inside.
On all the drugs she took within,
The snake grew fat, and she grew thin.
Twelve days and nights in pain she spent,
And then to Doctor Bugg she went.
He heard her painful story through,
But did not think that it was true.
He knew the motions which a snake
Outside or inside ought to make,
And so told her, but she was sure
It was a snake that made her poor.
He told her then he'd have to make
A deep incision for the snake.

He set a day to operate;
For this she tremblingly did wait.
That day a little snake he bought,
And to her room in secret brought;
The cut he made and sewed and dressed;
When she awoke then he confessed
A little snake in her he'd found;
She saw the snake and felt the wound,
And soon got well and paid his bill.
The papers praised his wondrous skill,
And great and widespread was the fame
That from this operation came;
And men of science came to take
A picture of this wondrous snake,
And vainly to explain they tried,
How it had got in her inside,
And marveled how it stayed within,
And lived and thrived and kept its skin.

Jays of Earth

Natural Justice

A greedy man was Nelson Payne.
His farm three forties did contain,
And yet for more he did aspire;
And for this purpose did acquire
A job to grade a railroad-bed,
Where by a bluff a river sped.
Among the help he did employ
One was a tall and slender boy,
Half-grown and awkward, yet who would
Do quite as much as grown men could;
But this young man was very poor
And had sought work from door to door
Until he got this chance to toil
With pick and shovel in the soil.
Here 'neath a sultry July sun
He worked from morn 'till day was done,
The gravel threw, with stones and sand,
Into a wagon near at hand,
And Payne for this agreed to pay
One dollar for the work per day.
But when he learned the boy was poor
And work had sought from door to door,
He thought he saw a splendid chance
To grind him down to fifty cents;
And so told him if he would stay,

Jays of Earth

It must be for this smaller pay.
Harry Wilson, was his name,
And when this message to him came
It was to him a cruel blow.
His poverty then made him go
To Payne and beg most piteously
That he'd reverse this hard decree,
Urged his great need, and how he must
Refuse an offer so unjust.
But Payne was firm, and all his plea
Made Payne the firmer seem to be.
Payne's love of power and lust for pelf
Made him care only for himself;
This was his answer to the plea;
"What are your thoughts and needs to me?"
The lad quit work, the years rolled on,
And neither saw the other one.
Payne signed a note one evil day,
Which he did not expect to pay;
The man he signed for then he knew
Could pay the note if it were due,
But later lost his wealth, and so
The owner let the matter go
Not wishing to make Nelson Payne
So great a loss as this sustain.
Great changes come as years go by;
Some fall below and some rise high.
Now Harry Wilson went away,

Jays of Earth

And absent long, returned one day
And met the man who owned the claim
Upon this time-stained note of Payne.
In one year more the note he saw
Would have been cancelled by the law.
No interest on the note was paid,
Which added on, a large sum made.
He bought the note at trifling cost;
Brought suit in court, and Nelson lost.
He thus a judgment did obtain
And levied on the farm of Payne.
The day before the sale was set,
Payne went to Wilson with regret,
Begged him for time, and mercy too,
And to reduce the sum then due.
Then Wilson answered to his plea,
"What are your thoughts and needs to me?"
The selfsame words he did employ
That Payne had used to him, a boy.
And so Payne found the worm he'd spurned
In after years with vengeance turned.
He lost his farm to pay the debt,
And something learned he'll not forget.

Honest Tom

Tom Goody was an honest lad
Who many strong temptations had;
But never did he choose to stray
And leave the straight and narrow way;
And never once was made to yearn
For guilty gold he did not earn;
And ever faithful at his work,
At last became a hotel clerk.
Behind his desk a safe was kept;
He held the key while others slept;
The guests gave him their jewelry
And cash to keep from day to day;
He handled all their precious dust
And never faltered in his trust,
Returning promptly all he got
And gladly did the thing he ought.
One day a singer, of great fame,
To this hotel for lodging came;
She had a bag of jewels rare
But would not trust it to his care.
It chanced while Tom was working 'round,
This bag of precious gems he found;
No thought of guile came to his mind;
Who owned the gems he sought to find;
Then gave to her the precious store;
Her face with smiles was covered o'er,

Jays of Earth

She gave him then that he might go
A gallery ticket to her show.
His grateful heart received the card,
For virtue brings its own reward.
And so he toiled from day to day
And humbly walked the honest way,
Deeming his soul to be secure
From all temptations which allure,
But runners of the swiftest pace
Sometimes are beaten in the race;
The proudest towers may tumble down;
The strongest swimmers yet may drown;
The victor in a hundred fights,
May finally be put to flight;
And thus did honest Goody, too,
Meet one day with his Waterloo.
A stranger came from Kimberly
The diamond field of Africa;
To Tom a traveling bag he gave,
And told him this valise to save
From every hand except his own,
And let no person take it down;
That he would hold him for the fault,
Should it be taken from the vault.
The stranger had a curious mien,
Like one who had much travel seen;
And wore that deep mysterious stare

That might denote a millionaire.
The care he took this bag to keep,
Caused Tom disturbance in his sleep;
He laid awake for hours and thought,
What with its contents could be bought;
Reflected on his lot so poor,
And how escape he could secure,
And from the wealth this bag contained,
What lofty heights there could be gained;
When age had settled on his brow,
He might a church or school endow,
And after years this little crime
All would condone who saw him climb.
So first in all his straight career,
To Tom temptation did appear
In force so strong that he grew weak,
And soon to steal the bag did seek.
When morning came the bag was gone,
For guilty Tom with it had flown.
The stranger did not seem distressed,
When first the Landlord to his guest
The theft of Tom with grief did state,
And of his flight the facts relate.
The stranger gave a sickly grin
And said they need not search for him;
The reason he such care did take,
The bag contained a rattle snake.

Joys of Earth

Fear of Ghosts

A little country cottage stood
Close to the entrance of a wood;
And there we lived. Not far away
An old neglected graveyard lay;
Its stake-and-rider fence was down
And every space was overgrown
With weeds and briars and grasses tall;
There often must I go to call
Our cattle home when they would stray
Off from the hills and go that way.
"Do I believe in Ghosts? O, no,
He stated false who told you so.
Ghosts cannot hurt you; all they are
Is just a vision that may scare,
Brought to you by your foolish fears."
I was a lad of fourteen years
When this remark I proudly made,
Believing I was not afraid.
He was a modest, truthful man
Who heard me speak, and he began
With solemn voice and mien sedate
And told the tale I now relate.
"It was," said he, "A moonlight night;
The ground with snow was covered white,
But clouds were sailing in the sky
And gusts of wind went whistling by;

Joys of Earth

Sometimes the moon shone bright and clear
Then suddenly would disappear,
Causing that ghastly kind of glare
That straightens up a fellow's hair.
And then the wind hissed through the trees,
Like ghostly voices that might freeze
Your blood with fear, if you should see
A sheeted ghost behind a tree.
I rode a horse, and knew that I
Must go that night the graveyard by;
I felt secure and did not fear
That any harmful ghost was near.
So as I slowly rode along,
Whistling a quick and merry song,
Yet looking carefully aside;
The graveyard fence I then espied,
Bore something strange between the stakes.
This, thought I, is a weight that makes
The stakes stand firm; when suddenly
A squatty devil leapt toward me,
Alighted squarely on my horse,
And from behind held me by force
With stubby claws of rattling bones;
I could not speak, but o'er the stones
My trembling horse ran wild with fear,
Until the stable yard was near.
Then from the horse this ogre jumped
And disappeared. My wild heart thumped,

Joys of Earth

As up the stairs I swiftly flew,
With thanks to God that I was through
That horrid ride, that awful night,
Embraced by such a devilish sprite.
We lived in rooms above a store—
My wife and little girl of four.
The child slept on a trundle bed,
There was a window near her head.
When all had gone to bed, I lay
In sleepless state, nor dared to say
One word of that which racked my mind,
When suddenly I heard a grind
Upon the window sash, and then
It slowly raised, and slipping in,
This frightful fiend came through the space
And leapt upon my daughter's face.
She woke and screamed, 'Go way! Go way!'
Then in a frightful fit she lay.
I lit a lamp, though much in fright,
And found the fiend was not in sight.
Still in the fit my daughter lay
And screamed in frightened tones 'Go way!'
I seized my dear one by the hand;
I raised her up, and made her stand;
Then struck her hard, and said, with fear,
'In God's name, Fiend, get out of here!'
Then from her form this devil came,
And limped away like he was lame.

I heard him scramble o'er the chairs
And drag his carcass down the stairs,
My daughter came out of the fit
And does not now remember it.
My wife saw all and well she may
Confirm the truth of what I say."
The last words scarcely had been told
When loud to me my father called:
"The cow is in the graveyard, go
And bring her home!" I'd said you know,
"I'm not afraid of ghosts," but then,
The night was dark and windy when
This call I heard, and I must pass
Where gravestones stood, in weeds and grass
And trees bent low, and shadows deep
Were hovering where the dead now sleep;
And while I wasn't afraid—somehow—
We passed that night without the cow.

Jays of Earth

William the Silent

His name was William Evergreen;
Two little hills he lived between;
Quite awkward was he, tall and spare,
With whiskers long, and bushy hair.
He sat around while others walked,
And silent kept while others talked,
So many said 'twas their belief
His lack of sense would cause him grief.
One day he sold his timber land,
Received his pay in cash in hand.
Then many tried to get a share
Of all the cash he had to spare;
But soon they found 'twas vain to try;
What they would sell, he would not buy;
What they would hire, he would not lend;
What they sent for, he would not send.
But soon there came into the place,
A stranger with a kindly face;
So fair it was to look upon,
It seemed a Song of Solomon
Made into flesh, that one might trace
Its lines upon the human face.
He was a preacher, so he said,
Who came that way to earn his bread.
Our Evergreen he called aside

Joys of Earth

One day a secret to confide;
He said, while Indians he had taught,
An aged one a brick had brought
That he had found, and had been told
The brick was made of solid gold,
Yet had no knowledge of the worth
Of such a lump of precious earth.
Had he the money he would try
How cheaply he this brick could buy.
He said this redskin, much in fear
Of being robbed, was hiding near,
And if together they would go,
To them the golden brick he'd show.
He told his tale while such a grace
Shone on his affidavit face
That William could but silent sit,
And tacitly agree to it.
They found the Indian in a wood,
Where with the brick he waiting stood.
Five hundred Dollars was his price—
Which surely was a sacrifice,
Of such a lump of gold, if pure;
And that of this they might be sure,
They clipped a corner from the brick,
And their return to town was quick.
A jeweler made a crucial test
And found it was of gold the best.
Then William gave a bill so bright
It filled the Indian with delight;

Jays of Earth

He left the brick and slunk away;
The preacher disappeared that day.
The jeweler could not long restrain
His wish, to see that gold again,
He bored and weighed the brick and said:
"This lump of gold is gilded lead
And all its gold, I am afraid,
Is worth not half the price you paid."
The news through town soon scattered then
How Evergreen had swindled been
And many said it was a sin,
And some 'twas good enough for him.
Some said 'twas always their belief
His lack of sense would cause him grief.
So much was said that William broke
His silence, and thus calmly spoke:
"I guess I was not badly bit,
The bill I gave was counterfeit."
To him the trick was very plain,
He had prepared to win the game.
But where he got his bogus bill
To play the game is mystery still.

Mose Cohen's Insurance

Mose Cohen was a traveling man,
With trunks of samples he began
In youth to go from place to place,
And offer merchants silk and lace;
Months were required to make these trips;
He rode on railroads and on ships,
And knew that many dangers lurk,
For one engaged in such a work;
And so, when on a trip he went,
Insured himself 'gainst accident.
Sometimes the train ran from the track
And many killed; sometimes a hack
Its contents in the gutter threw;
Sometimes a steamboat broke in two;
Sometimes a hotel where he stayed
By whirling winds a wreck was made;
By all these means were many slain
But safe returned our Mose again,
And never got a single cent
For any kind of accident.
And many years things went that way
Until, upon a certain day,
When, wealthy grown, his wife and he
Had planned a trip across the sea.
Thus he resolved to take a rest
And visit scenes he thought the best;

Joys of Earth

But just before he took the train
He sought an agent, that again
He might insure before he went
'Gainst every kind of accident.
He answered questions on a blank,
His name, his height, his age, his rank;
Then gave his check to pay again
And hurried swiftly to the train;
His wife he met, and quickly they
Rode to the shore where waiting lay
The boat to bear them o'er the sea.
When safe aboard, then she and he
Sat on the deck and watched the shore
Become a streak, then show no more.
While on the deck they careless sat,
His wayward eye espied a cat;
He tried this passing cat to catch,
And for his pains received a scratch;
The scratch was long, and deep enough
To start the blood where skin was tough.
His wife said, "Moses, don't you see
You now can get indemnity."
He howled like he would wake the dead
Then quickly he retired to bed;
And there she nursed him night and day,
And kept him bleeding all the way.
His appetite was very good,
And yet he did not take much food.

Jays of Earth

He starved himself, in hopes that he
Might get a large indemnity.
And when the steamboat reached the land
He seemed so weak he could not stand;
They carried him to shore that day,
And there in bed confined he lay,
Until the boat that brought him in
Its homeward journey could begin.
Then Mose was carried back on board
And tenderly in bed was stored,
And fed on gruel all the way
Until the boat had reached the bay.
By ambulance he made the train
And soon was in his home again,
And there to bed he quickly went
And for the agent swiftly sent,
To show his wound, in hopes that he
Would get a large indemnity.
The agent came to him that day,
But said the claim he would not pay,
Because in haste to reach the station
Mose failed to sign his application.
Then up in bed Mose Cohen sate
And uttered oaths, I'll not relate;
He's taken many trips since then
But never has insured again.

Jays of Earth

The Taxidermist

There abode
Once a toad
Near a road.

There he lay
All the day
By the way.

Not a fly
Did he spy
Buzzing by.

Not a word
Had he heard
From a bird.

Not a bee
Did he see
On the lea.

But a man,
With a can,
To him ran,

With a grin
On his chin
Pushed him in.

Joys of Earth

To his tent
Then he went
With content.

Then the toad
There he stowed
With a load

He had caught
And had brought
To that spot.

What he canned
He had planned
On a stand

In a small
Little hall
By the wall

He would kill
And would fill
From the mill.

Thus the toad
That abode
By the road

Joys of Earth

In a stall
Of this small
Little hall

He had planned,
Stuffed and tanned.
He would stand.

Such a fate
Did await,
As I state;

For this toad
That abode
By the road.

In the stall
Of this small
Little hall.

Retribution

Sometimes I've seen a broad-browed, learned man
Become the hireling of a wealthy fool,
Willing by self-debasement where he can
To earn small wages as a truckling tool.

Sometimes a pious preacher I have seen
Hang to a worn-out, false and useless creed,
Pronounce it sacred truth and strive to screen
The facts that prove it false, solely for greed.

Sometimes a skilful lawyer takes a fee
To help a rascal win a bogus suit,
And all his skill to make a moving plea
For this vile cause does gladly prostitute.

Sometimes a venal doctor will contrive
To keep a patient ill to rob his purse,
And purposely into his body drive
The surgeon's knife to make his victim worse.

Sometimes a merchant flaunts a lying sign
To lure into his store the passer-by,
And has sham cost-marks forged with the design
To make the purchaser believe a lie.

Sometimes the cruel, purse-proud millionaire
Treats with contempt the humble working poor,
And on their just requests bestows no care,
Thinking his own position is secure.

Jays of Earth

Sometimes I've seen a judge of great renown
State falsely law and facts to shield a friend,
And while the spurious judgment he set down,
His love for justice loudly did pretend.

Sometimes wise men put honor up at pawn,
To gain the bauble plaudits of the crowd;
Deceive and flatter, sneak and bend and fawn,
To hold a humble place among the proud.

Sometimes the love of woman has been made
A thing to sell to any who will buy;
Oft love and wealth are offered in a trade,
For graceless rank and imbecility.

Sometimes a mighty nation has been known
To draw the sword of war in Freedom's name,
Yet by its conduct it has plainly shown
That greed for conquest was its shameless aim.

Sometimes it seems as if the earth were lead,
The heavens brass and human hearts were steel;
Sometimes it seems as if our God were dead,
When sway of cruel wrongs we see and feel.

But moving outward from the dim unseen,
To execute the task for ages planned,
Mute as the dew that mists the meadows green
We see the sweep of the Almighty hand.

Joys of Earth

Then proudly gloating o'er its cruel power
Crime's strongest castles totter to their fall;
In vain its votaries in that dreadful hour
Strive to sustain them and are ruined all.

For drunken folly vainly strives to place
A solid structure on a rotten base.

Jays of Earth

The Typewriter Girl

There are many great forces that sway in our land,
Which working together bring riches and power.
We see them in action at every hand,
And we treasure the numerous blessings they
shower.

II

Perhaps from the list of the greatest and best
It is proper to single out commerce as Queen,
For she spans the whole earth, and at her behest,
The people obey her as ruler supreme.

III

She musters her forces in one vast machine,
She has leaders and followers and workers galore,
And all work together to further her scheme,
Like the numerous persons employed in a store.

IV

Of this vast aggregation in commerce allied,
From its simplest acts to its liveliest whirl,
There's none more important or more sorely tried
Than the worker we call the "typewriter girl."

V

In maidenhood's morning she comes from the
school,
As modest and pure as the violets of May;
Through long weary hours she sits on her stool,
And from morning till evening her quick fingers
play.

VI

And she many swift trips o'er the keyboard must
make,
As letter by letter she prints on the sheet;
And her arms and her fingers and back often ache,
And her eyes burn with pain, ere her work is
complete.

VII

And often in shorthand dictation she takes,
And sometimes the matter is very abstruse,
Her young brain is racked with the effort she
makes
To translate the brief notes that stenographers
use.

VIII

Through long tedious days of monotonous toil
Her girlhood she patiently gives to her tasks;
She is courteous and kind and is faithful in all,
And little indeed are the wages she asks.

Joys of Earth

IX

Her shoulders grow stooped after years have been
passed;
The color of youth often fades from her face;
Her bright eyes grow dim; many ailments at last
A pale hectic flush on her features may trace;

X

Yet she faithfully works until death or disease,
Or possibly marriage may take her away;
Her heart's blood she coins into gold by degrees,
But the fruits of her labors with her never stay.

XI

As the years circle round, her employer grows rich,
And farther and wider his business expands,
But he seldom remembers that many a stitch
In his fabric of wealth is the work of her hands;

XII

That the typewriter's tick is the musical charm
That has lured the fair goddess of plenty to him.
He forgets the worn hand and the toil-stiffened
arm,
The overworked brain and the bright eyes made
dim.

XIII

He bequeaths his great wealth to his kinsmen and
friends;

Or perhaps he endows a large church or a
school;

Though many his gifts, not one of them tends
To reward her who toiled on the typewriter
stool.

XIV

There's a hope I have cherished for many a year,
That somewhere and somehow the good shall
be blest;

That a day of just judgment will sometime appear,
And all of the wrongs of the weak be redressed;

XV

When those who have laid on the altar of right
A life of hard labor, so patient and true,
May receive in a manner to give most delight
A payment in full of what is their due.

XVI

And when at that judgment seat all of us stand,
And the typewriter girl takes her place with the
rest,

'Tis my hope that the judge, with a liberal hand,
Will see this true worker forever is blest.

Jays of Earth

Money Lending

How elastic the step of the one who would borrow;
He's as prompt as the dawn and as bright as
the day.

If you lend him the money he'll pay you tomorrow;
He has plenty of cash soon coming his way.

He has stocks and has bonds and has friends who
are wealthy;
They soon will return to lend money to him.
His wife and his children are frugal and healthy;
He waits on your leisure and humors each
whim.

His smile is as gentle as widows in waiting;
His accents are soft as the zephyrs of May,
While the tale of his honor and truth he's relating,
And informs you how surely and promptly he'll
pay.

How fair is the front that the borrower flashes,
A brow like great Jove or a patriarch's beard,
And eyes like a lambkin with innocent lashes;
One glance at his face and suspicions are
cleared.

Joys of Earth

Sometimes he has manners a sovereign might
covet,

A grace and a poise that a god would adorn;
What he states you believe without asking to prove
it;

To question his credit you naturally scorn.

Sometimes 'tis a lady bewitching and tender,
With eyes like an angel's rolled upward in
prayer;

In a voice quite beseeching she begs you to lend her,
A few paltry dollars to drive off despair.

Her rent is now due and her mail has miscarried;
In a few days her brother the money will bring;
Her daughter tomorrow expects to be married
To the favorite son of a great money king.

You lend them the money, the time comes for pay-
ing;

You now all the walking and waiting must do;
In vain do you send to the place of their staying;
In vain do you write them to come and see you.

If they come they regale you with wretched luck
stories,

Of sickness and losses from floods or from fires;
And tell of their anguish and long nights of worries,
Of promises broken and good men turned liars.

Jays of Earth

And many ingenious and plausible ruses
They employ to prevent you from getting your
due;
And numerous the flimsy and lying excuses
They invent to avoid the collector from you.

They have nervous prostration, so none may come
near;
They are called in great sorrow to sick beds
afar;
They are under the knife of a surgeon, you hear,
Or were injured severely while leaving a car.

No longer they prance like horses of mettle;
No longer employ gentle tones when you meet;
They sneak and they skulk when you seek them to
settle;
And, as soon as they see you, cross over the street.

The one who lends money, with skill that's un-
failing,
Should probe for the naked truth down to the
bone;
Should be deaf to all pleas, and all weeping and
wailing;
His will should be iron, his heart should be
stone.

Wearv

Since infancy his wearv feet have run
To suit the beck and nod of every one—

On sand or clod,

On stones or sod—

And now he needs a rest.

Since half-grown hands could hardly pull the hoe,
Or wield the ax or strike a feeble blow,

He's pulled and struck

On knots and muck;

And now he needs a rest.

Since first to think his youthful mind began
He's planned and schemed for many another man;

He'd sweat and fret

Through cold and wet,

And little get;

And now he needs a rest.

And there's his loving wife—he broils that she
May spend the heated summer by the sea;

There dine and wine,

In diamonds shine,

Where he can never be.

His darling daughter to the mountain goes,
And there her nectar sips amid the snows;

While home he stays

Joys of Earth

And bills he pays,
And has no holidays.

His other gentle birds enjoy the sky,
And use his wings whenever they would fly.
Close to the ground
By toil he's bound
In ceaseless round—
To soar he dare not try.

With many loving relatives he's blest;
They visit him and much enjoy their rest;
He toils and moils,
Takes what each soils,
Or anything that anyone has left.

He's borne the rust while others wore the shine,
Has eaten scraps left after others dine;
He wants some pelf
Now for himself,
So he can take a rest.

He's drawn the bow and seen the others dance;
He's pulled the load and watched the others prance;
And now he wants a chance
To take part in the dance,
Or else to take a rest.

Joys of Earth

Through many years he's felt the constant grind;
His back is almost broken, but, his mind
 And heart are tough,
 He's had enough,
And now demands a rest.

He's often told that death will give him rest,
That by the joys of heaven he may be blest;
 He does not seek the tomb;
 What he demands is room—
That he must have, for he must have a rest.

Jays of Earth

A Mexican Bull Fight

Much of the cruel past survives;
The good hath great vitality, and the bad,
Which gave delight to men when men were brutes,
Still gives some joy to brutish men.
I saw a bull-fight once,
Near where the Rio Grande
Its yellow waters empties in the gulf
And forms the boundary of two Christian lands—
Two great republics of the western main.
It was the Sabbath day,
Fair as the day that first on Eden shone;
The soft south wind came gently from the gulf,
Freighted with perfume from the odorous plants,
And forests blossom-laden;
The peaceful heavens bent so benignly,
And in such matchless beauty bloomed the earth
That many birds of fairy plumage
Chanted a gleeful chorus to the smiling skies.
All nature seemed attuned to sing of love.
It was indeed a precious Sabbath day,
Well fitted to recall the love of him
Who gave his life to teach the world to love,
And write the law of kindness on all hearts—
That law of universal love and tenderness
From man to fellow-man, and man to bird and
beast.

Jays of Earth

On this most hallowed day,
And in a city where a score of Christian altars
shine,
And where the squares and public streets
Bear names commemorating Jesus Christ,
And men have named their children with His name
And proudly bear His name themselves,
And where at frequent intervals by night and day
They kiss the crucifix and con the rosary;
Here after morning prayers were said
And loud Hosannas sung to praise His name,
Men, matrons, boys and girls and tender babes
Assembled in an ampitheatre
To watch the torture of some helpless bulls,
In that which oddly was miscalled a fight.
There half a dozen men in armored suits,
With swords and spears and weapons of defense,
Shielded by hiding places near at hand,
Conjointly strove to wear out and destroy
A frightened, helpless bull, who vainly tried,
With all these odds against him, to escape.
The actors in this cruel sport
Were dressed in colors of such gaudiness
The very sight of them the bull offended;
This to increase they flaunted in his face
Robes of like color fitted to enrage
Even a bull of decent taste.

Jays of Earth

While irritated thus, they pierced his beauteous
sides

With metal darts whose brads held to his flesh,
And as the blood gushed from the wounds thus
made,

This Sabbath crowd shrieked with a fiendish glee,
Compared to which the bellow of bull
Is heavenly music to a kindly ear.

What gave most relish to this game of blood
Was when the picadores came in,
Urging blindfolded horses in the ring;
Old nags they were, crippled with years of toil,
And deemed of value only for this sport.

Mounted on such they were spurred on,
To stem unshielded the excited bull,
Who tossed these brutes upon his horns,
And gored their throats and unprotected sides,
Until their life blood poured upon the ground,
And in the dust their mangled entrails dragged.

When this occurred the patrons of this scene
Were with such frenzied ecstasy o'ercome
Some threw their hats and garments in the ring
And raised so harsh and hoarse a howl,
It seemed as if the fiends of lowest hell

Had set this Sabbath for a holiday.

Attending on this game two judges sat in state,
With beards of patriarchal length and sober brows.
It was their lofty function to control this sport,

Joys of Earth

And fix the time to kill the tortured bull.
When worn with frenzied efforts to escape
And weak from many wounds and loss of blood,
He could but feebly stagger round the ring,
A matadore, with long, keen, slender sword,
Reached for his heart with calculating thrust;
And thus by many efforts did succeed
In drawing forth the current of his life.
Then he who once was monarch of his kind,
And formed by nature with most cunning skill,
To be the parent and protector of a herd,
Staggered and fell, writhing in fiercest pain,
Dropping his limbs distorted on the ground,
And by a span of horses was dragged out
To give another victim room.
Meanwhile the lovers of this cruel sport
Went wild in spasms of delight,
And rent the yielding skies with shouts and shrieks
That might have made a cruel devil blush
To see such joy at sight of agonizing death.
One bull showed greater skill for flight than temper
to resist,
And when his sorrel sides were filled with wounds
And covered thick with highly colored darts,
He, bleeding, was dismissed alive; the other five
were slain,
After half hours of torture such as I describe.
I have no heart to joy in cruelty,

Joys of Earth

And often have I stepped aside
To miss a crawling worm along my path;
Nor do I harbor feelings of revenge
Or wish a fellow creature harm;
But I was so offended by this sight
Against my will I could not help but pray
Some power would give the bull supernal strength
To toss his armed tormentors from the ring
And drive pell-mell the audience from the place.
Since watching thus this loathsome scene,
My mind turns backward o'er the waste of years,
To days when Spain was Mistress of the sea,
And many lands and isles of ocean called her
Queen,
And seeking for protection turned to her;
In place of such she gave them cruelty,
Gilded her mansions with the spoils of states,
And gorged her coffers with their pilfered shrines.
'Twas then this wicked pastime came in vogue,
To please the bloody minions of most cruel Spain,
Then spectacles of gore became so common,
And heartless cruelty so much in fashion,
That even children laughed at scenes of woe
And found sweet music in the dying groans.
What are the fruits borne by this Upas tree?
Behold proud Spain now whipped from every land
And vexed with bloody discord in her own,
Dismantled of her isles, a ghost of power,

Jays of Earth

A soulless relic of a bloody past.
And thus the many tortured bulls, bred on her An-
dalusian plains,
Have not died unavenged.
Then how can mighty Mexico permit
The public practice of so great a crime,
And teach her sons to deal in such dire acts
Even toward helpless brutes, without at last
Feeling the sharpened steel in her strong sides?
In vain we call upon the name of God,
And beg forgiveness for the Savior's sake;
In vain our spires ascend and altars blaze,
With silver, gold and many precious gems;
In vain we pray the saints to mediate
And shrive us from the guilt of many sins,
And fall contritely in the face of heaven,
While we with sanction of our human law
Out of the Sabbath carve a holiday
And make a common banquet of rank cruelty.
These nimble sons of glorious Mexico
Should find employment worthy of their skill,
And suited to the welfare of their state.
These beauteous brutes should by the nation's care
Be kept to lead and ornament the herd.
These faithful horses for their years of toil
Should find asylum in her pleasant meads.
And young and old be ever taught to find
Their joy in kindness both to man and beast.

Jays of Earth

Our Country

I

There's a land that I love where the Western sun
 beams
On the greenest of hillsides and clearest of streams,
 And the freshest of breezes blow balmy and
 free;
Where lakes of rare beauty reflect the bright sky,
And near them great cities in majesty lie,
And fields wave in blossoms entrancing the eye,
 And the great Mississippi rolls down to the sea.

II

On her towering mountains the cataract leaps,
From the cliff in the clouds to the cavernous deeps,
 And flashes and dashes its spray high in air.
Her forests of corn wave their tassels of light,
Her meadows of cotton wear garments of white,
And fruits of all hues which the senses delight
 There abundantly grow in her orchards so fair.

III

There the sheltering groves tell of mercy above,
And the musical birds sing of infinite love,
 And the rippling streams hint of heavenly
 mirth;

Joys of Earth

There the richest of soils speak of bounty divine,
The unfettered breeze symbols freedom sublime,
And all the delights of the senses combine,
 To point the way upward to heaven from earth.

IV

While sweetly in southland her orange groves blow,
The fields of her northland are covered with snow,
 But from northland to southland her great
 rivers roll;
From the shores of her east to the shores of her
west,
There are seasons for toil, there are seasons for
rest,
And the means for enjoyment that all like the best,
 And one beautiful banner floats over the whole.

V

Many races of men have united in one,
And deeds of great glory together have done,
 When from foreign dominion this country was
 freed.
On the broad base of justice they founded a state,
And made it secure as the pillars of fate
From the frenzy of mobs and the schemes of the
great—
 A government suited to every need.

Jays of Earth

VI

And thus they bequeathed a new flag to the skies,
The Star Spangled Banner of beautiful dyes,
The promise of freedom wherever unfurled;
Its red stripes are symbols of blood that was shed
By patriots, the bravest that earth ever tread,
Its white, of the pure hearts for freedom that bled,
And its stars of their undying fame in the world.

VII

From Alaska's fair shores to the isles of the sea,
Where floats our bright banner, the people are free,
And the sight of our flag causes cheers of delight.
And well may our hearts beat with loftiest pride,
When we think of the thousands who willingly
died,
And all of war's perils and anguish defied,
To make this fair banner an emblem of right.

VIII

And such is our land that the banner it flies
Unshackles the earth and enriches the skies,
And raises the fallen wherever it goes;
Then step to its music and cheer every note,
And declare that our banner forever shall float,
Let praise for our country inspire every throat,
And justice and kindness relieve us from foes.

IX

Let the strong shield the weak, and the weak help
the strong,

And justice and freedom to each one belong;

Then our wide spreading empire will blossom
with joy.

The night of oppression was long and severe,

But the dawn streaks the heavens and morning is
here,

Clasp hands then my brothers, and be of good
cheer,

And the blessings of liberty wisely employ.

Jays of Earth

The King of Mardi Gras

On Pensacola's beauteous bay
The Southern breezes softly play;
On Santa Rosa's sandy isle
The midday sunbeams sweetly smile;
In February's placid sky,
A myriad flags and streamers fly,
Their yellow, green and purple hue
Contrasted with its deepest blue.
About the wharf upon the bay
A hundred vessels waiting lay.
'Tis two days now till lent begins
When sinners should atone for sins,
And ancient custom doth decree
These two be spent in revelry,
Feasting and song and gay parade
And merry pranks and masquerade;
Because two days thus gayly passed
Will much relieve the lenten fast.
To rule the days of feast and cheer
A foreign King will come, we hear;
And so the streets and wharf and boats,
And every kind of craft that floats,
From sparkling bay to shining shore
With merry throngs are covered o'er,
Each watching southward eagerly

Joys of Earth

To see this King come from the sea.
The mayor and the council wait
To greet this King with hearts elate,
And offer him the city's key
With freedom for hilarity;
And many maids of bright attire
Surround a maiden all admire,
Whose graceful form and stately mien,
Proclaim her as the chosen queen.
Now mirth and glee fill every place,
And glow in every waiting face,
And all their cares have laid away
To spend this jolly holiday,
And each has early come that he
May be the first this King to see;
And many thousand soldiers stay
About the wharf and near the bay,
Ready to march in his parade
Whene'er the King has landing made.
Now when the royal bark is seen
A hundred whistles loudly scream
And many thousand shouts arise
In concert to the yielding skies.
When welcomed by this grand salute,
The gracious monarch and his suite
Ride proudly in with armor bright
To where they safely may alight;

Jays of Earth

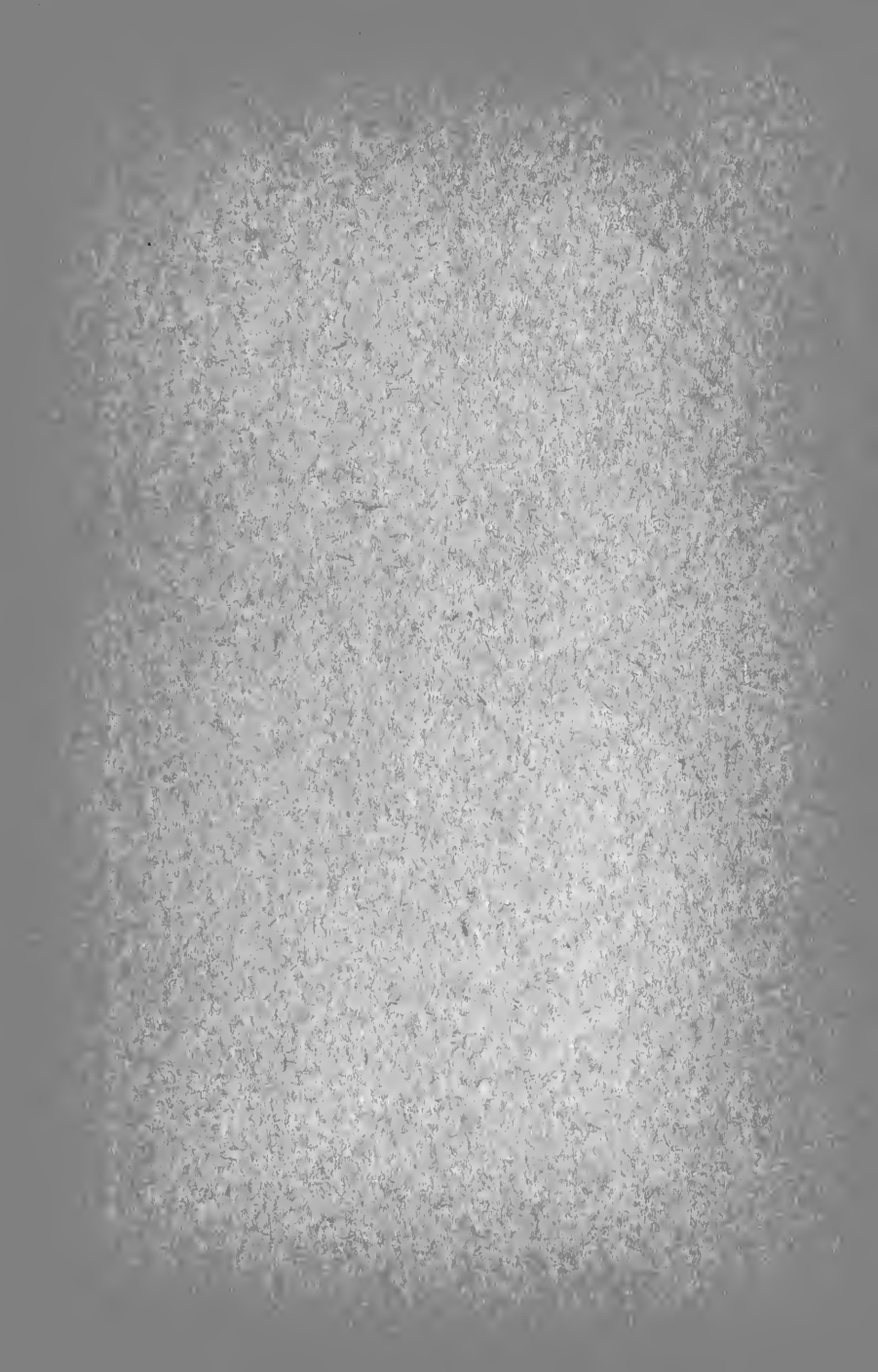
Each mounted there a prancing steed;
The monarch soon assumed the lead,
And forward moved the bright array,
Along the city's broadest way;
There eager crowds await to cheer
Where'er the monarch doth appear.
The King and all his suite are masked,
And who are they is often asked.
The royal face is hid from sight
Until the coronation night,
And curious thousands strive in vain
The secret of the King to gain.
This first parade begins the fete,
Whose revelry continues late.
Great numbers came for many miles
With faces wreathed in happy smiles.
From Monday noon till Tuesday night
With gay parades the streets are bright
And young and old are neatly dressed,
And southern beauty looks her best.
On Tuesday night the great parade
Which months of preparation made,
With royal car and floats of white,
Moved through the streets in rosy light;
And while this bright procession passed
The cheering crowd watched to the last.
Then on a stage the queen was crowned

While waiting thousands sat around,
And after this all had a chance
To greet the king and queen and dance.
There grace and youth and beauty bright
Commingling danced with great delight.
The festive hours were quickly spent
Till midnight came, when it was lent.
Hail, Priscus, King of mirth and joy,
Delight of every girl and boy
Who casts confetti in your face
And smiles on you with saucy grace!
Hail, Priscus, King of dance and play,
Who brings a double holiday,
When workmen lay aside their tools,
And learned teachers quit their schools,
And every class find great delight
From early morn till late at night!
Fair Pensacola, while thy bay,
Reflects the changing hues of day,
And in the clearness of the night
Gives back to heaven its gracious light;
May all the tides the ocean pours
Come gently to thy peaceful shores,
And ships of nations always find
Thy sheltered bay a harbor kind.
As year by year thy buildings rise
And touch with spires the Southern skies,

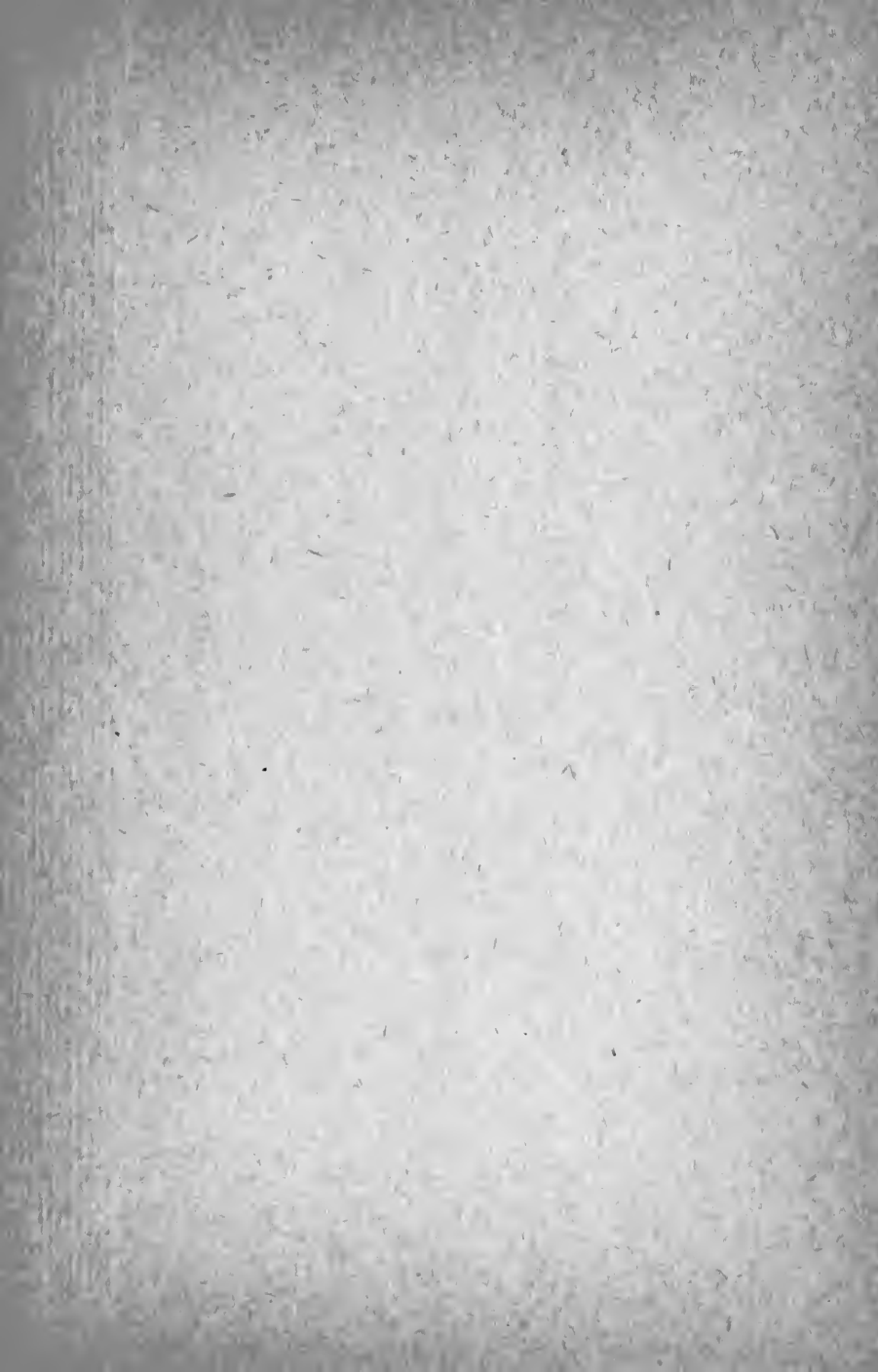
Jays of Earth

May love and wisdom find a place
In thee to dwell with every race;
And when a monarch rules in thee
May he be "King of Revelry,"
By fancy framed unknown in law
A Monarch of the Mardi Gras.





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